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Saturday Review of Literature

VOL. XXXI No. 19 MAY 8, 1948 FIFTEEN CENTS

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By JUSTICE OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

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THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE, published weekly by the Saturday Review Associates, Inc., 25 West 45th Street, New York 19, N. Y. Harrison Smith, President; J. R. Cominsky, Executive Vice President and Treasurer; Norman Cousins, Vice President; Amy Loveman, Secretary; Lillian Grannon, Assistant Treasurer; Robert A. Low, Advertising Manager; Bert Garmise, Circulation Director. Subscriptions $6 a year; $7 in Canada. Member of Audit Bureau of Circulations. Printed in U. S. Vol. XXXI, No. 19, May 8, 1948. Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Indexed in the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature."

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TRADE Winds

THE LITERARY SCENE

● ● In Hollywood, precocious Leo Guild sought to include a Bernard Shaw piece in a new anthology. "I hope you understand," he wrote Shaw, "that I cannot afford to pay your usual fee as I am a very young man." Shaw replied, "I'll wait for you to grow up."

● ● In Windsor, Ontario, an author mailed a dime to the Canadian postmaster-general, explaining "I have filled my fountain pen in the Windsor post office once a week for the past twenty years." His P. S. read, "I'd have sent more if that stuff you use really was ink."

● ● In Coventry, England, a classified ad was placed by a lass who may not have been a descendant of Godiva, but who certainly craved a ride: "Young lady will dispose of entire library and wardrobe in exchange for small car."

● ● In Princeton, Robert E. Hage turned in his manuscript of "Jet Propulsion in Commercial Air Transportation" to the Princeton University Press, predicted that "a medium-range turbojet transport carrying twenty-five to thirty passengers and cruising at over 500 miles per hour is a likely development for major airlines before the end of 1950." That would cut the trip from coast to coast to less than five hours!

● ● In New York, Max Capote Schulman posed for his portrait, went over with a bang.

● ● In Midland, Michigan, the Dow-Corning Corporation has developed a new silicone-treated tissue that cleanses eyeglasses in a jiffy. Ten cents will purchase a generous supply, expertly packaged under the name of "Sight Savers." You will thank me for this tip!

● ● In Chicago, a movie tycoon paused in his flight to lavish praise on the author of his latest epic. "He's so generous," exclaimed the tycoon, "he'd give you the pants off his back." Then he added, "Of course, he's an author, so I had to watch him like a horse."

● ● In New York, Elmer Davis, Peabody Radio Award winner, pleaded for both broadcasters and publishers to stop endless imitations of proven successes, and strike out in new directions. He rated almost as much applause as Ingrid Bergman, who merely had dropped in to see the Carol Irwin-produced "Theatre Guild on the Air" make off with another of the awards. John Drewry, Dean of Georgia's S. of J., and Ted Weeks, *Atlantic Monthly* editor and gadabout, handle these Peabody awards in masterly fashion.

● ● In the Town Hall Club, Historian Arnold J. Toynbee, guest of *SRL*, defined history as "something unpleasant happening to someone else," cited as an example of rapid change in the world of today a New Zealander who had been a cannibal twenty years ago, and was now peddling life insurance. One guest informed Toynbee, "You look like a large-size edition of Irwin Edman!" "I consider that a compliment," said Dr. Toynbee.

● ● In New York, a news magazine decided at the last moment to kill a not-too-flattering review of a novel that struck pretty close to home. Intended capition for the review: "The Novel Is the Pay-off."

● ● In *Clue*, Clayton Rawson's promising new monthly guide to mystery in books, stage, screen, and radio, the "House Detective" is intrigued by Bantam's tieup with Post's Bran Flakes, whereby two bits and one box-top get you "The Sign of the Ram" and an extra Bantam volume. *Clue* suggests "Trent's Last Case" for a dozen Pepsi-Cola bottle tops, and "The Gold Bug" for a Flit label.

● ● In Philadelphia, an alert editor discovered that John Steinbeck had told the complete story of "The Pearl" in a single paragraph in his "Sea of Cortez," written in conjunction with Edward T. Ricketts in 1941. Steinbeck's newly published "Russian Journey," incidentally, is tops in its class. Can that man write! (Two other excellent reasons why you should phone your bookseller as soon as you finish this paragraph: W. L. White's "Lost Boundaries" and Humphrey Slater's hair-raising "Conspirator.")

● ● In Tinpan Alley, the Forster Music Company, publisher of the song "Missouri Waltz," had conniptions at the thought of Scribner's using the same title for an exposé of the Pendergast Machine. Scribner's, threatened with legal action, abandoned the title on the eve of publication, necessitating frantic wires to reviewers, and eleventh-hour changes in jackets, advertising, and publicity. (Nobody knows de Troubles a Publisher's Got!)

● ● In the radio department of the *New York Post*, Editor Paul Denis decided that the troubles of theatrical folk bore retelling too. His book

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● ● In the juvenile department of Coward-McCann, Alexander Klemin, famed aeronautical engineer, is the hero of the day. Klemin ordered six copies of his own book "The Helicopter Adventure." The bill came to $10.17. He paid immediately—with a check for $5,010.19. "Maybe," suggested Tom Coward, "the tide has turned!"

● ● In the *Chicago Review,* Harry Hansen spotted a key to Gertrude Stein's prose that should dispel for all time the slightest incomprehension of what she was talking about:

> Miss Stein's fear of the future is not a panoramic phobia. It is a pained fear of the next instant. What is bad now will evolve to worse confounding. Her prose style, built upon orbicular repetition, seems designed to hold the moment in a perfect staticity—to avoid the flow into the next and more loathsome instant. Her Now holds catholicity against which the future describes an impingement of cruel protest.

● ● In Philadelphia, the wife of a striking compositor helped balance her budget by taking a job in a laundry. She ironed while the strike was hot.

● ● In Toronto, a new Canadian magazine, *Here and Now,* has made its bow. It rates "A" for both content and typography.

● ● In Mississippi, the Hon. R. M. Kelly welcomed members of the state bar with this temperate appraisal:

> Now, what of the ladies? When God made the Southern woman He summoned His angel messengers and He commanded them to go through all the star-strewn vicissitudes of space and gather all there was of beauty, of brightness and sweetness, of enchantment and glamor, and when they returned and laid the golden harvest at His feet He began in their wondering presence the work of fashioning the Southern girl. He wrought with the gold gleam of the stars, with the changing colors of the rainbow's hues and the pallid silver of the moon. He wrought with the crimson that swooned in the rose's ruby heart, and the snow that gleams on the lily's petal; then, glancing down deep into His own bosom, He took of the love that gleamed there like pearls beneath the sun-kissed waves of a summer sea, and thrilling this love into the form He had fashioned, all heaven veiled its face, for lo, He had wrought the Southern girl. . . ."

In Louisiana, one Southern girl, at least, forgot all about sweetness,

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enchantment, and the snow that gleamed on the lily's petal, when the honor of her family was impugned. On the day I visited Thibodaux, she inserted the following paid advertisement in the *Commercial Journal:*

To My Dear Friends of Lafourche Parish:

I, as a resident of the Tenth Ward of Lafourche, would like to have you know that what Dr. Barker and Mr. Richard Cheramie said after my husband, Mr. Gilbert J. Duet, are just malicious lies. Dr. Barker said that my husband killed a man, but I would like to disappoint his thought by letting him know that my husband never killed a man. One thing that Dr. Barker has to say is that my husband is a criminal and a blackjack. My friends, if there is one blackjack to be spoken of, Dr. Barker is the one. He has the dirty nerve of saying that my husband killed a man when he did nothing but good for the people of the Tenth Ward. Dr. Barker and Mr. Richard Cheramie said all kinds of bad things after my husband in their first and second primary campaign because they thought that if he supported Sheriff Ducos he was going to have a job. My friends, he could have a job if he wanted but he doesn't want one.

I am the mother of five children —one boy and four girls. My son is seventeen years old and when he heard Mr. Cheramie and Dr. Barker say these bad things at the meeting from our house he got out of the house. My daughters, Hazel, Eula Mae and Barbara Jane, were at the show and come home just because they just couldn't take what that so-called Richard Cheramie was saying after my husband. The things he said were really to hurt somebody and he not only hurt my family but my husband's mother, because Mr. Cheramie's mother and my husband's mother are twin sisters. That goes to show you how far he went into the family.

As of now I leave it up to you, the good people of the Tenth Ward, to tell me if I am wrong or right.

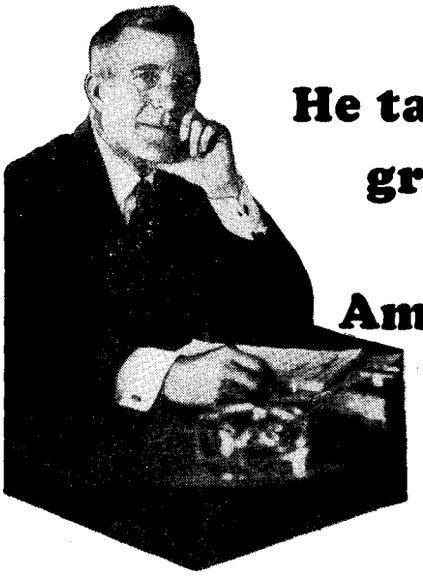
I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Very respectfully yours,

MRS. GILBERT J. DUET.

I can't wait to hear what the Tenth Ward did about it!

BENNETT CERF.



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The Saturday Review of Literature

Twisting the Tail of the Cosmos

Musings from the Private Letters of

JUSTICE OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

EDITOR'S NOTE: *To the lawyers who stood at the bar of the United States Supreme Court, and even to most of his biographers, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes seemed an Olympian figure, great but remote. The rich human personality known only to his intimates is revealed in part by a group of seventy-eight personal letters he wrote to the distinguished American "philosopher's philosopher," the late Professor Morris R. Cohen. Dr. Felix S. Cohen, Visiting Professor of Legal Philosophy at the City College of New York and at Yale University, edited the correspondence between his father and Justice Holmes for the January 1948 issue of the* Journal of the History of Ideas. *With the permission of the editors of the* Journal *and representatives of the Holmes and Cohen estates,* SRL *reprints excerpts from eighteen of Holmes's letters.*

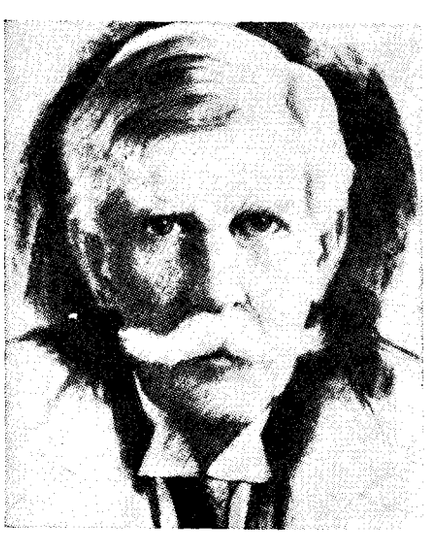
I AM glad that a philosopher is interested in the law — I hardly should be interested in it—if it did not open a wide door to philosophizing—and enable me to illustrate another of my chestnuts that the chief end of man is to frame general ideas —and that no general idea is worth a straw—

* * * *

I at least go on very comfortably without the belief that I am in on the ground floor with God, or that the cosmos, whether it wears a beard or not, needs me in order to know itself. I suppose it needs me as it needs any grain of sand, because I am here. And the whole, if there is a whole, would be I know not how much other, if an atom were subtracted from it, but I do not believe that a shudder would go through the sky if our whole ant heap were kerosened. But then it might—in short, my only belief is that I know nothing about it. Truth may be cosmically ultimate for all I know. I merely surmise that our last word probably is not *the* last word, any more than that of horses or dogs. It is our last word nonetheless. And I don't see why we shouldn't do our job in the station in which we were born without waiting for an angel to assure us that it is the jobbest job in jobdom. But we are all like the old knights who wouldn't be satisfied with your admission that their girl was a very nice girl, but would knock your head off if you didn't admit that she was the best ever—bar the Virgin Mary, perhaps.

* * * *

I have just been reading Bertrand Russell's "Mysticism and Logic" with much less liking for "A Free Man's Worship" than, I gather from Laski, you feel. It seems to me no better than shaking your fist at the sky. It presupposes a πον στῶ outside the universe. Also I inferred from our former talk and your writing that you would agree with him in thinking reason paramount to the universe. Whereas I don't see that it stands any differently from my preference of champagne to ditch water. It is one of my Can't Helps, and no doubt is paramount in my universe, but as a bettabilitarian, I bet there is (with apologies to the unknown for even that predicate) a universe of which mine is only a very inadequate aspect, from which my Can't Helps come and that may or may not be superior to them. I admit that it is among the *non apparentibus* as to which speculation is useless but we all like to try a twist at the tail of the cosmos.



—*From "Yankee from Olympus."*

Oliver Wendell Holmes: "Man is like a strawberry plant."

* * * *

My father was brought up scientifically—*i.e.* he studied medicine in France—and I was not. Yet there was with him as with the rest of his generation a certain softness of attitude toward the interstitial miracle —the phenomenon without phenomenal antecedents, that I did not feel. The difference was in the air, although perhaps only the few of my time felt it. "The Origin of Species" I think came out while I was in college—H. Spencer had announced his intention to put the universe into our pockets—I hadn't read either of them to be sure, but as I say it was in the air. I did read Buckle—now almost forgotten—but making a noise in his day, but I could refer to no book as the specific cause—I never have read much of Voltaire and probably at that time had read nothing. Emerson and Ruskin were the men that set me on fire. Probably a sceptical temperament that I got from my mother had something to do with my way of thinking. Then I was in with the abolitionists, some or many of whom were sceptics as well as dogmatists. But I think science was at the bottom. Of course my father was by no means orthodox, but like other even lax Unitarians there were questions that he didn't like to have asked —and he always spoke of keeping his mind open on matters like spiritualism or whether Bacon wrote Shakespeare—so that when I wanted to be disagreeable I told him that he

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straddled, in order to be able to say, whatever might be accepted, well I always have recognized, etc., which was not just on my part.

* * *

The other day I took from the shelves and began to read Plato's "Phaedo." I found on it my note Feb. 3, 1860. It was fifty-nine years almost to a day since I last read it! What a queer thing to hear people talk of the "inexorable logic" by which Socrates led to his conclusions. You could drive a six-mule team through the gaps—but it is wonderfully taking literature even when you rebel or rather smile at the admissions that this, that, and the other is evident from the proof.

* * *

As long as law means force—(and when it means anything else I don't care who makes it and will do as I damn choose—) force means an army and this army will belong to the territorial club. Therefore the territorial club will have the last word —subject to the knowledge that if it does too much there will be a war in which it may go under in its present form. Also I am with you in your partially expressed rebellion against the notion that something particular has happened and that all our old ideas are upset—Even Pound sometimes talks as if it were a recent discovery that social considerations are paramount when you come to a final issue. I am thoroughly with your defense of the philosophic attitude, and so I might go on. . . .

* * *

Man is like a strawberry plant, the shoots that he throws out take root and become independent centers. And one illustration of the tendency is the transformation of means into ends. A man begins a pursuit as a means of keeping alive—he ends by following it at the cost of life. A miser is an example—but so is the man who makes righteousness his end. Morality is simply another means of living but the saints make it an end in itself. Until just now it never occurred to me I think that the same is true of philosophy or art. Philosophy as a fellow once said to me is only thinking. Thinking is an instrument of adjustment to the conditions of life —but it becomes an end in itself. So that we can see how man is inevitably an idealist of some sort, but whatever his ideal and however ultimate to himself, all that he can say to anyone else is—*Je suis comme ça.* But he can admit that a person who lives in a certain emotional sphere should be indifferent to intellectual justifications although he reserves to himself his advantage of believing that he can explain the other and that this other can't explain him.

That is all that I wanted to say but I will add apropos of the acquired superiority of means to ends—that we think the statesman better than the man who simply eats his dinner, travels to and fro, and begets—yet the statesman is only a means to his doing so. Also an anecdote of when I was young—a man who called himself a juridical traveler said: We speak of the Remorse of Conscience—a thousand years ago more or less we said The Ayen Bite of Inwit—the image is the same—biting back on oneself—and is equally intelligible to you or me—but the introduction of a dead language has made it unintelligible to the man in the street—And so by the mere force of language (he concluded) we are creating a spiritual aristocracy. The answer again is that the derivation has got new roots—that we no more think of the image than does the man in the street—and that he knows what remorse means as well as we do.

I think the best image for man is an electric light—the spark feels isolated and independent but really is only a moment in a current.

* * *

Miser, saint, philosopher, painter all illustrate the so-to-speak physiological destiny of man to live to ends outside himself and so to be an idealist and a martyr, while most of the misers, saints, and the rest don't recognize that they are examples of the same thing. Of course what you say as to nature not being a prudent artisan and as to blind impulses seems to me O.K. but not quite relevant to what I had in view.

* * *

One additional word as to Spengler, to thank you and tell you how he tickles me. I read slowly as I can give only a limited time to the book and have to use the dictionary—though N. B. it is wise not to bother too much or one loses the general thought in the detail. I have read only sixty pages—but you may imagine that I chuckled at *es gibt keine ewigen Wahrheiten.* He gets nearer to being able to smile at himself than most Germans, though I doubt if he can—well, this is only a grunt after an hour, a happy hour, with this book —and now I must take my very modest constitutional walk—

* * *

This moment sees the finishing of Spengler—damn him—he has been my task and duty since I have been here —a duty not too assiduously pursued, you can see from the time taken, even though I had constantly to turn to the dictionary. The swine has given me my money's worth—for I haven't read anything so suggestive and stimulating for a long time, from its abundant *aperçus* in spite of excessive repetition—I don't believe his most fundamental propositions, but I feel a lot of new light on the different *Kults* that he discusses. I infer that he is not so strong on the natural sciences as he is on mathematics, music, and art—Were he not a German I should be surprised at his dogmatism in statement, when his general view is so sceptical. In spite of his scepticism he seems to feel an inward demand for absolute truth and to be disappointed at the conclusion that he can't scoop up the universe. As I read I often wished that I could consult you. I don't understand his distinction between the realms of space and cause and effect and of time and *schicksal.* What is cause and effect outside of time—and what is *schicksal* if not the working of cause and effect? I don't doubt that you could explain—I am perfectly willing to believe that he can't say experimentally that cause and effect are exactly equivalent—For the matter of that, I have often said that if causes suddenly ceased to produce effects — or phenomena appeared without cause—and I was not too scared to think—I should simply say—Tired so soon? I thought you would last my time—But I make more

(*Continued on page 30*)

—Fayer.

My Current Reading

Dorothy Thompson, author, newspaper columnist, and lecturer, needs no introduction. Miss Thompson's column on current affairs is syndicated in many newspapers.

SEXUAL BEHAVIOR IN THE HUMAN MALE, *by Alfred C. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, and Clyde E. Martin (Saunders)*

JAMES MADISON: THE NATIONALIST, *by Irving Brant (Bobbs-Merrill)*

RUSSIA IN FLUX, *by Sir John Maynard (Macmillan)*

THE GREAT REHEARSAL, *by Carl Van Doren (Viking)*

IDEAS HAVE CONSEQUENCES, *by Richard M. Weaver (University of Chicago Press)*

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Fiction. *Young Norman Mailer's 700-page war novel is the most significant of those reviewed this week. It heralds the arrival of a new talent on the literary scene who has been able to create living human beings out of the nightmare invasion of a Pacific island. Three other American first novelists take their bow in this issue. Hiram Haydn, a publisher and editor of* The American Scholar, *has written in "The Time Is Noon" a mature account of flaming youth in the hectic days before the axe fell on the stock market in 1929. David Goldknopf's "Hills on the Highway" tells in today's terms the old story of the writer who succumbs to the necessity of making easy money in the big magazines. The clock industry and the jewelry trade take a beating at the hands of Frederic Laing in his "Six Seconds a Year," another story of a young man's surrender.*

Nightmare on Anopopei

THE NAKED AND THE DEAD. By Norman Mailer. New York: Rinehart & Co. 1948. 721 *pp.* $4.

Reviewed by MAXWELL GEISMAR

JUST when we have stopped talking about the new literary voices of the 1940's, they seem to be appearing. Norman Mailer is a young American writer who grew up in Brooklyn, went to Harvard, and found himself, as a rifleman, in Leyte and Japan. His earlier work has appeared in *Story* magazine and "Cross Section," but "The Naked and the Dead" is his first novel. It is a solid and interesting story of the capture of Anopopei, a typical Japanese island in the Pacific, a nightmare in short.

Mr. Mailer uses some of the technical devices which John Dos Passos initiated in the American novel, while there is also an influence of tone. But "Three Soldiers," like most of the typical stories of World War I, was essentially a novel of individual protest. The military organization was something to escape from, not to understand. The virtue of "The Naked and the Dead"—and I think it will be the typical pattern of the new war novels—is that it sees the individual within the military organization, and attempts to evaluate the whole complex structure of the American Army in war and peace, as a manifestation of contemporary society, as well as a weapon of conquest and destruction. Or perhaps even, in the Tolstoyan sense, as one-half of our "natural" existence.

That doesn't mean Mr. Mailer particularly approves of army life, or that the campaign on Anopopei was an idyll of human decency. The novel opens with an amphibious assault upon the island. The central group of characters are members of a reconnaissance squad; the slow, blundering, and tortured progress of the military action also marks their physical and moral disintegration as human beings. The plump and foul-mouthed Wilson, the superstitious and embittered Gallagher, the ambitious and servile Brown, the tough and rebellious Red Valsen, all are partially or completely destroyed by their ordeal; to live through it is not necessarily to have survived. Only the slow-thinking farm boy, Ridges, and the "intellectual" Brooklyn Jew, Goldstein, seem to have the necessary resources, whether of sheer animal vitality or of spiritual comprehension, to endure the impervious jungle, the sickening climate, the steady, demoralizing contact with filth, pain, and terror even more than the actual and paralyzing shock of combat.

Staff Sergeant Croft, too, an excellent soldier to begin with, becomes a rigid and implacable tyrant; if he has accepted the hatred of his men as part of his job, he soon begins to nourish it. As the novel moves up through the ranks of the military hierarchy, it is particularly good on the relationship of these men with the commissioned officers. There is an ironical episode in which Major Dalleson, a typical disciplinarian and drill-master, goes into panic because the Japs have given him a chance for a breakthrough, and he is forced to use his troops. Lieutenant Hearn is a social rebel who has broken away from the conventions and prejudices of the ruling class, financial or military. General Cummings, who has given up human relationships completely, for the sake of organization and efficiency, who believes that the only value of a human soul is the use it can be put to, also believes that, after the war with Russia, the next century will belong to the reactionaries and the capitalists. And why not?

The antagonism between these last

THE AUTHOR: Trees and occasionally even writers grow in Brooklyn—vide twenty-five-year-old Norman Mailer, author of two unpublished novels, his first to be accepted reviewed opposite, and a new fiction work incubating in Paris. While at Harvard (B.S. 1943), he wrote for the *Advocate* and won *Story* magazine's 1941 college contest. The 1944 "Cross Section" included his novella "A Calculus at Heaven," the 1948 edition a chapter from "The Naked and the Dead." "There are really no such things as types in America," he says. "As a result an American writer has to spend a good bit more of his time defining his characters down to the sections in which they live, their speech, and the particular prejudices they've assumed. An American writer has to define his characters and redefine them before he can be concerned with such abstractions as courage, humanity, good, and evil. I've been very fortunate in cutting across a lot of social groups," he adds, listing a patchwork history as dishwasher, soda jerk, flat-painter, usher, theatre publicity assistant, and mental hospital attendant. In the Army he served in Leyte, Luzon, and Japan, was a surveyor, regimental intelligence clerk, aerial photograph expert, wireman, reconnaissance platoon rifleman, cook, and baker. He doesn't think the last decade's writers have been sufficiently political, holding that "partially accountable for the poverty of American letters in this period." After finishing "The Naked and the Dead" (it took a year and a half) he and his wife, an ex-Wave lieutenant, went to the Sorbonne on the GI bill. Always slight, he's now down to 130 pounds. His manner is confident, his expression forthright, but he shies at publicity. "I have started fooling around with oil painting," he writes, "—pure fun for me, since I have no talent at all, and therefore can have no disappointments." —R. G.

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two figures, both human and theoretical, gives Mr. Mailer a chance to build up, often very eloquently, the historical and philosophical connotations of the war. In the end Hearn is broken and killed. Perhaps this represents Mr. Mailer's own conclusion about the future, yet Hearn is a curiously vapid character, and the ordinary soldiers in "The Naked and the Dead" lack the vitality and originality of, say, the Britishers in "The Edge of the Night." Mr. Mailer leans rather heavily on the sexual experiences of his lower-class figures, too; these may be a solace for the common man, and even a source of strength, but they don't constitute his only achievement.

I think this is the main weakness of the novel, for there is no real balance of the dramatic forces in it, just as there is a final lack of emotional impact. The story ought to be more impressive than it is. Within these limits, however, "The Naked and the Dead" is a substantial work, and Mr. Mailer is a new novelist of consequence.

Atomic Age Antics

PLUNDER. By Samuel Hopkins Adams. New York: Random House. 1948. 348 pp. $3.

Reviewed by JONATHAN DANIELS

MAYBE the saddest commentary on the state of our Government, military and civilian, in the Capital of these United States today is that Samuel Hopkins Adams's new novel about it is almost credible. It is not quite. Indeed, Mr. Adams obviously never intended it to be. But his noisy satire of the sons-of-bitches and the ungrammatical melodrama which they make along the Potomac are just a little too fantastic to make sense even in a fantastic satire of the atomic age.

He has written, nevertheless, a lively tale of loot and plunder in a 1950 which is designed to look remarkably like the spring of 1948. His Neanderthal patriot Martin Strabo is certainly a recognizable, if exaggerated, type of the Washington dealer in contacts and contracts. Even Strabo's weird Scott Circle establishment, equipped with statues of the American heroes and a free bar for the American politicians and camp followers, seems vaguely familiar in a capital hot in the pursuit of both Communists and cash.

By the time they get to Washington, the Martin Strabos have usually already taken diction lessons unless they are with equal care preserving a Texas accent. Not many of them remain naive about getting into the right club after they have found out how to get to the right people in the War Department. And, sadly enough, not many of them have receptionists quite as pretty, promiscuous, and sentimental at the same time as Mr. Strabo's Claribelle Claire. But the woods of Washington, as is well understood in the Atomic Age, are filled with both charming and eccentric nuclear physicists like those who are involved for good or evil in the Strabo promotion deals.

Naturally an America eager for protection from atomic rays falls hard for Strabo's protective patents. Generals, Senators, and others with their hands out are ready to help the lucrative business along. Indeed, it seems pretty clear that nothing could have come between Martin Strabo and ultimate occupancy of the White House if he had not made the mistake of thinking that a country which does not object to a man fixing the government, including the armed forces, can safely also fix a football game—and the Army and Navy game at that. (Incidentally, Mr. Adams's satirical description of the football game is also first-class sports melodrama.)

Of course, in the end, when the sports reformers have grabbed the safe in which Strabo keeps his books listing the price tags on various VIP's, he and his beautiful receptionist have to fly the country. Reports coming back, however, are that they are doing very well in exile and the same old Washington waits for the next Strabo or the return of the old one.

A reader who is willing to take his exaggeration, even of always overdrawn Washington, without much dilution will find this a sexy, noisy, ribbing comedy of the already aging atomic age.

I think there is a place in the national economy for novels of this sort. They are Wholesome. They show how valuable Patience and Kindness are. They put down all the expected words in the expected places on the page. For example: "Fulmer refused the proffered cigarette with an angry shake of his hand, and Parris lighted his own." Or: "He was surprised to see her blush, but she laughed lightly." Or: "Laurel noticed her husband's preoccupation at dinner, his absent-minded replies to questions aimed at him by the children, and she led him into her little sewing room for his after-dinner cigar." It is useless to protest that children do not aim questions, that "after-dinner

Publisher's Gallery

IV: Henry A. Laughlin

CRADLED at St. Paul's and fortified with a Princeton Litt.B. (1914), Henry A. Laughlin tiptoed into publishing "through the back door as a $10-a-week odd man" with the Riverside Press, founded in 1852 by Henry O. Houghton. "Too many of my family were in [Pittsburgh] steel for another to go into," he explains. Fifteen years later, he was pivoted to president of Houghton Mifflin in Boston, and had to learn about trade books "top down."

He's average height, compactly built, rosy-cheeked, with Celtic blue eyes and crisp gray hair—a grandfather five times over. "I do a good many things badly," he says—skiing, riding (he raised two of three horses at his Concord, Mass., home), fox hunting, and catching pre-Broadway tryouts. "I just *love* 'Mr. Roberts'!" The Irish Army took over his box in Eire, and "it's a wreck now." Generations ago his forebears—"black Protestants"—emigrated from Northern Ireland. He reads a lot, mostly history.

Last summer he went to England to confer with Winston Churchill, who joins a cherished list that includes Lloyd C. Douglas, Ben Ames Williams, and Richard Lockridge. He was one of the last people to talk with the late John C. Winant, a childhood friend.

He predicts a GOP victory in November, "a good housecleaning," but little deviation from bureaucracy. About labor he is temperate, too; Houghton Mifflin's educational, trade, and manufacturing departments all together offer President Laughlin "troubles—and gratifications." Selling U. S. Security Bonds takes up a lot of his time, but he thinks "it is the duty of every person who can to do something outside of his own gainful occupation." He doesn't expect an early war. "I'm an optimist." —R. G.

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cigar" is as stale as yesterday's cigar smell, that "he was surprised to see her blush" goes back at least to Ouida, that cigarettes in this style are invariably "proffered," that "an angry shake of his hand" is an unreal, theatrical gesture. For this is the essence of good reading at the mediocre level. And what can you say about it except that for people who like this kind of book, this is the kind of book people like?

A War Within a War

ARABESQUE. By Geoffrey Household. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1948. 312 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by GEORGIANA G. STEVENS

THE MIDDLE EAST, to civilian Europeans stranded there after the fall of France, seemed a fortress, menaced by Rommel's armies to the West, and by a thousand nameless uncertainties from within. The story of "Arabesque" is the story of one of these involuntary expatriates, the enigmatic and glamorous Armande Herne, who found herself virtually a prisoner when the French Army of the Orient sailed out of Beirut harbor, leaving the Levant to the divisive ministrations of the Free French and the Spears Mission.

Armande had arrived in Beirut as interpreter for a French plane maker, whose hasty departure with the evacuating French left her conspicuously jobless and unable to return home to England. Advice from her husband, remotely at sea with the Royal Navy, to get into one of the women's services didn't apply where no such services existed. Yet a lone, attractive, and intelligent woman in Beirut was suspect.

Made increasingly aware of her equivocal position by constant inquiring visits from security officers—both French and British—Armande decided to take measures. She sought out and offered her services to David Nachmias, one of the Jewish Agency's expert Arabists, then working with British Intelligence.

Armande's first assignment was a brilliant success—technically. It involved relieving one of the Lebanon's most gallant sheiks of the best of his hoarded arms, in the name of the British Government. There have been few episodes in contemporary fiction told as well or with such restrained irony as Mr. Household's account of Armande's patient interchanges with Sheik Wadiah. All the delicacy of social intercourse in the East, the finest nuances of courtesy and taste, the wisdom and chivalry of Wadiah and his kind, and, above all, the essentially leisured pace of negotiations with the Arab, come through in one of the best vignettes of Levantine diplomacy in many a long year.

"Arabesque" is not just the story of Armande Herne and her checkered fate following the ill-starred arms deal. It is, rather, a story of how political currents mingle in the Middle East, entangling their assorted protagonists in the most subtly contrived complications; and making even the most innocent actor in the drama an unwitting accomplice, possibly, of murder and disaster.

Specifically, Armande discovered that the arms she had wangled so proudly for her country were actually destined for a future war against it in Palestine. Her slow and painful discovery of that fact and the penalties she pays for it make up much of the book. It becomes then a story of a war within a war. There is the big show, against the Germans. But the smaller show appears in full perspective, with all the makings of classic tragedy, as the scene of the book shifts to Palestine, and as it focuses on the tension gathering between the British and the Jewish Agency, personified by Nachmias, and the Agency and the Jewish terrorists, who threaten the great Zionist dream. Mr. Household's insight and sympathy are nowhere more apparent than in his vivid portrayal of Nachmias's last session with the young Irgun leaders. Here, particularly, in the moment of terrible climax, Mr. Household proves himself a master of sound psychological suspense.

Woven through the book is the love story of Armande and Sergeant Dion Prayle of Field Security. Prayle's intuitions and laconic inferences do full justice to British Intelligence tradition. He not only rescues Armande eventually; he makes the book. In creating him—or recreating him out of his own experiences in Middle East Intelligence — Mr. Household demonstrates once more a sure gift for characterization, as well as an enviable talent for weaving his way with assurance through the maze of Middle East politics.

Georgiana Stevens, wartime OSS political expert on the Near East, in 1947 made a visit to the same area.

1929 Meridian

THE TIME IS NOON. By Hiram Haydn. New York: Crown Publishers. 1948. 561 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by WALTER HAVIGHURST

THE YEAR 1929 has become a familiar symbol in America; it stands for the final dizzy spiraling of a heedless prosperity and the crash with which that precarious structure fell. For this novel it stands for the hour of noon, with the morning light gone garish and the evening shadows soon to come. How the forces of 1929 played upon six young Americans is the substance of Mr. Haydn's elaborately developed story. It follows these characters through various encounters, in Florida, in a New England college, in Boston, in New York, in Cleveland, and in Paris. It unravels many tangled strands of relationship and experience, but all of them have a common hectic quality that derives from the symbolic year 1929.

Since this is a 1929 story, beginning in the month of March with a gaudy picture of Flaming Youth on the sands of Florida, it culminates inevitably with the Wall Street collapse seven months after the story's opening. There are other period themes and furnishings — rebellion from Boston, Greenwich Village studios, Montmartre cafes, inspirational big business men, and repeated references to activities in "the Street." This deliberate selection suggests the author's preoccupation with the scene of 1929, a concern that makes his characters belong peculiarly to that year, and so exaggerates and distorts them.

One of the novel's characters speaks of the time as "fabulous," and Mr. Haydn, for all the knowing qualities of his novel, seems to approach it with the same conception. The early scene of attempted seduction in a vast lifeless, unfinished hotel on the Florida beach has a theatrical quality that inevitably shades the rest of the novel. This early sensationalism is unfortunate, because there are better things in the book. Some of the college narrative is alive and stirring. Many of the characters have an immediate credibility, and a few of them grow into convincing, three-dimensional persons.

The most interesting of them is Sol Krassovsky, who was forced out of Emerson College because of the vehemence of his newspaper column. Sol's post-college journalistic experience has a significance that is lacking in Charles Hoyt's initiation into industrial management or in Lathrop Stone's introduction to New York publishing. Sol's love affair with the

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—Von Behr.

David Goldknopf relieves "the burden of doom on his characters with wit."

—Percy S. Smith.

Geoffrey Household weaves "his way through the maze of Middle East politics."

Hiram Haydn "unravels many tangled strands of relationship and experience."

Frederick Laing "shows all the familiar moves in the familiar chess game."

Florida girl Sand Warren is more meaningful than Tom Robinson's uneasy marriage with the rebellious Harriet Hawthorne from Back Bay Boston. And Sol's ironical education among the New York revolutionaries is something to remember after the precocious dazzling girls and the grim young men are forgotten.

Hucksters in Gems

SIX SECONDS A YEAR. By Frederick Laing. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co. 1948. 307 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by
HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

THIS book is described on the dust-jacket as "a deep and thoughtful novel, a story of first-rate importance." The blurbs on this cover include encomia from Burton Rascoe ("likely to be one of the most closely read. . . ."), William Rose Benét ("Sheldon's final surrender to the business system . . . a searingly personal kind") and Struthers Burt ("impressive piece of work"). All this leaves me a little gasping, and I wonder whether we all live in the same universe of discourse. I sadly report that "Six Seconds a Year" is, to my taste, just another novel. It is "The Hucksters," if you will, transferred to the clock industry and the jewelry trade, with a smart ending which takes advantage of the current rage for the race problem as a fictional bang. Some casual sex, an instructive chapter or two on clocks and what makes them tick, clipped dialogue, and a vague attempt to catch the feel of the Twenties—these are the chief ingredients, plus the love story.

Possibly, as one gets along through the years, one begins to recognize the truth in Dr. Johnson's remark in his later life, that the biographical parts of literature attracted him most. Possibly, despite Macaulay's notion of bliss as lying on a sofa and reading novels all day long, fiction gets a little tinny by and by. But I wonder. I wonder if the current alarm in the general trade departments of most of our publishing houses doesn't point to something deeply wrong with our fiction, our mode of plugging it, our notions of what will sell. Mr. Laing's "Six Seconds a Year" is smartly tailored for what used to be called the carriage trade. It's metropolitan, it's sophisticated, it shows a rising young businessman losing his last ideal to the system, it shows how the hucksters work, it shows—well, it shows all the familiar moves in the familiar chess game. But is that quite enough?

In fact, is ballyhoo about fiction quite enough? Is anybody deceived by these glamorous dust-jackets, these quotable bits, these tantalizing previews ("Anita . . . watches Floyd maneuver [*sic*] expertly among the other salesmen, playing on their jealousies, jockeying for position . . .")? Isn't it about time that some of the high-powered boys in the "book promotion" world re-thought their problem? Is anybody much concerned about Anita and Floyd, when their "maneuvers" are presented at this catch-penny level? I wonder if there is any connection between the refusal of the public to buy books in quantities satisfactory to publishers, and the quality of the books' publicity?

All of which isn't a book review, and I beg Mr. Laing's pardon. His story is well enough, he has talent, his theme is up-to-the-minute, he is aware of social maladjustments, and one can have a sort of interest in his characters. But "first-rate importance"? Not if words have their usual meaning. "Deep"? No. "Impressive piece of work"? Honest and conscientious and well carpentered.

Young Man of Ideals

HILLS ON THE HIGHWAY. By David Goldknopf. New York: Harper & Bros. 1948. 242 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by HARRISON SMITH

THE theme of "Hills on the Highway" is perennial and always vital; and, as in the book under discussion, it can be absorbing. There have been many novels concerned with the sincere young man of ideals who tries to solve the old dilemma: how to be both honest and successful. They are sometimes agonizing to read; the reader is haunted by the memory of night-long sessions in college dormitories, bars, and the bleak rooms of Bohemia, crowded with young men and girls, arguing over the ideals of the moment. The theme is constant; only the characters, the objects and men revered or hated, the beliefs enunciated, change over the years. Even the ending of these novels of frustration remains the same. The youthful protagonists, lacking rare genius, finally succumb to two possible solutions; they compromise with the world, or they destroy themselves.

The author of the "Hills on the Highway," who has spent the last decade as a student of philosophy and psychology, must have a retentive memory. His title is apt, for the dilemma of Leonard, the veteran who gives up a job to create literature, is literally to go over the hills either to the poorhouse or to a reasonable existence. Leonard possesses everything that he should to undertake his battle with fate, except adequate talent. He even has a family eager to loan him money, to nurture his art while he makes the Great Experiment. His crippled friend Homer, another veteran, is the novel's devil's advocate.

(*Continued on page* 24)

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Personal History.

In all the personal histories here under review a quality of loyalty can be distinguished—the lifelong loyalty of Sidney and Beatrice Webb to their ideal of a socialized state, the burning if futile loyalty of Robert Emmet, symbol of Irish nationalism, to the cause of Irish freedom, the loyalty of Dorothy Detzer, of the Women's International League of Peace and Freedom, to the battle for peace as she saw it. As it happens, one of the more unusual books of the season, Christopher Sykes's "Four Studies in Loyalty," revolves around this theme. Really a series of biographical sketches by a sensitive Englishman, the volume is raised above the ordinary by the concept of loyalty which knits the sketches together. The lives discussed below were also, like those of Sykes's protagonists, "illuminated by great devotions to great causes."

Three-Cornered Marriage

OUR PARTNERSHIP. By Beatrice Webb. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1948. 543 pp. $5.

Reviewed by ASHER BRYNES

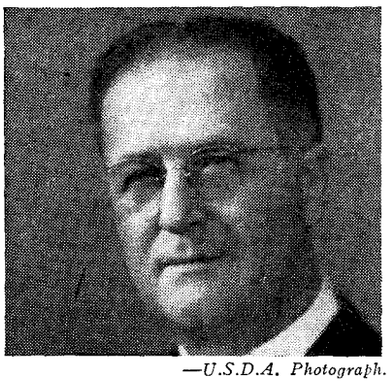
THIS is the sweetest-tempered book of the current publishing season; Mrs. Webb is not mad at anybody, and the Webbs move through it smoothly to achieve what they aimed at in the beginning. Meanwhile the reader is entertained with memories of the glitter and bustle of three generations of political, poetical, and philosophical Englishmen. Asquith, Balfour, Churchill, Haldane, Lloyd George, Ramsay MacDonald, Lord Roseberry, Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, and others of scarcely less eminence pass in review, their mannerisms are noted, their characters weighed, their specific worth summed up. Mrs. Webb had a sharp eye and a set of values. Her book is a solid as well as amusing chronicle.

But what about those values? They did not spring into being overnight; they have a history which the thoughtful reader will find even more fascinating than the personalities. The commencement is not told here. "Our Partnership" covers only the middle part of the narrative. Before Beatrice met Sidney—that part of the story is told in the previously published "My Apprenticeship" — she had become, slowly and vaguely, a collectivist through immersion in the eighteen-volume project of her cousin by marriage, Charles Booth. Booth's "Life and Labor of the People of London" combined detailed observation of individual families in the slum districts of the city with a parallel analysis of the institutions, social and political, which affected those obscure lives. This was Mrs. Webb's school. What she learned in it was the necessity for remedial action.

The evils were old, her knowledge of them new. Being a member of the governing class herself she demanded forceful solutions. Without any awareness of what it meant, from a political point of view, she assumed the need for a long series of laws, all involving increased public expenditure and public administration. She was well on into spinsterhood (thirty-four years old, as a matter of fact) when she met Sidney Webb. He told her. She joined him and the Fabian Society in the kind of three-cornered marriage that another Fabian, Bernard Shaw, celebrated in many plays. It was the outstanding Socialist romance of the century.

While their secretaries wrestled with mountains of select data the Webbs lobbied busily on two fronts. They published heaping books which won them a reputation as specialists before the general public, and through Beatrice's social connections they wangled incessantly for socialistic legislation. "Reading of all our intrigues [writes Mrs. Webb in 1922] was a shock to me, not so much the intrigues themselves as our evident pleasure in them. How far is intrigue permissible?" However, by the time she got around to asking that question she was sixty years old and both Webbs had grown so hardened in this habit that they no longer believed in liberal government on any terms. They broke violently with H. G. Wells because he was tainted with that philosophy: "He had hardly realized," says Beatrice in explaining his expulsion, "the function of the representative as a *foolometer* for the expert." Poor Wells argued that such reasoning made the people out to be fools, but this did him no good; and he subsequently vented his wrath in a satirical novel entitled "The New Machiavelli," which should be required reading for all Webb enthusiasts.

On the organization side the great achievement of the Webbs was the Fabian Society, founded a few years before Sidney met Beatrice; it flourished under their care and is today the oldest living Socialist society in the world. More than half of the present Labor Members of Parliament are Fabians, and since Labor is now the Government the mark that the Webbs have left on England is fairly obvious. It so happens, however, that this Government is at loggerheads with Soviet Russia and by extension with Communism — which adds a queer note. For the other great achievement of the Webbs was the identification of Socialism with Communism. In other words the Webb men are acting in an un-Webblike way, and that major catastrophe is made more serious by the fact that the



—U.S.D.A. Photograph.

My Current Reading

The list of reading below comes from **Clinton P. Anderson,** our present Secretary of Agriculture. Mr. Anderson is expected to resign soon in order to seek the Democratic nomination for United States Senator from New Mexico.

"BEN HUR" WALLACE, *by Irving McKee (University of California Press)*

ORDEAL OF THE UNION, *by Allan Nevins (Scribner's)*

ABIGAIL ADAMS, *by Janet Whitney (Little, Brown)*

THE AMERICAN PAST, *by Roger Butterfield (Simon & Schuster)*

SPEAKING FRANKLY, *by James F. Byrnes (Harper)*

JIM FARLEY'S STORY: THE ROOSEVELT YEARS, *by James A. Farley (Whittlesey House)*

ACROSS THE WIDE MISSOURI, *by Bernard DeVoto (Houghton Mifflin)*

EAGLE IN THE SKY, *by F. van Wyck Mason (Lippincott)*

OPERATION SANTE FE, *by Merle Armitage (Duell, Sloan & Pearce)*

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Webb doctrine is in every sense of the word correct.

Mrs. Webb states the case on the last page of the book, after describing how both of them utterly lost their faith in capitalism, whether modified (which she calls Socialism) or pure.

> A detailed examination of the new social order, in two volumes entitled "Soviet Communism: A New Civilization," was the final and certainly the most ambitious task of "Our Partnership." Whether we were right or we were wrong in acclaiming Soviet Communism with . . . above all its penalization of the profit-making motive and insistence on the obligation of all able-bodied persons to earn their livelihood . . . the event will prove. Perhaps I ought to substitute *will have been proved* or disproved before "Our Partnership" is published and read.

Well, this is something for the reader, not for a reviewer, to decide.

Ireland's Darling Hero

THE PURSUIT OF ROBERT EMMET. By Helen Landreth. New York: Whittlesey House. 1948. 407 *pp.* $3.75.

Reviewed by FRANK J. HYNES

ONE OF the most remarkable pieces of impassioned oratory in our language is Robert Emmet's last speech at the dock. Many's the time I recited one of its various versions (and my name was legion) when a lad in County Clare. My salad days are memorable for the tender sentiments aroused by the reading of Tom Moore's moving verses and the touchingly imaginative story "The Broken Heart" in Washington Irving's "Sketch Book." In nearly every parlor in Southern Ireland hung a steel engraving of the portrait of Emmet by George Petrie. It was my wont to stand in front of ours and gaze in rapt adoration. The sight of the immortal symbol of flaming nationalism standing silently there, arms folded, eyes scornful, proudly awaiting sentence of death, always brought a lump in the throat. He was, and always will be, Ireland's darling hero.

Many historians, for want of a pair of scales to weigh historical evidence, are inclined to place Emmet in the realm of poetry and romance, rather than in political history, and view the rising of 1803 as a mere protest and not an insurrection against the crown. Thanks to the indefatigable researches of Helen Landreth (who has a pair of scales) we now have the first full-dress biography of Robert Emmet ever written, and one that does him full historic justice. Miss Landreth went direct to the sources for her material and unearthed a wealth of new evidence, confirming the suspicions long held by students of Irish history, that Emmet was tricked by Pitt into revolt for the foul purpose of further enslaving Ireland. She spent eight years in England and Ireland patiently and scrupulously examining state papers, diaries, letters and notes of mercenary informers, manuscripts, documents and tomes. Her life of the martyr of 1803 is the most richly detailed one we have ever seen. In it we glimpse the Dublin of the late eighteenth century, hotbed of rebellious talk and temper. Echoes of the fiery utterances of Patrick Henry and Thomas Paine are still reverberating across the Atlantic. Young patriots athirst for liberty are addressing their orisons to the new French Republic. "The United Irishmen" have abandoned all hopes of political settlement and many of them are turning towards physical force. Albion is watchful of every move. The streets swarm with spies, paid informers crawl among the crowds and from the crevices of public buildings, Major Sirr's in his Heaven, all's right with the British.

Young Robert Emmet, son of the State Physician of Ireland, is a student at Trinity, the college that allowed the Earl of Clare to hold an inquisition to rout out "The United Irishmen" and that expelled Emmet for protesting it. His close friend Tom Moore writes a patriotic poem "Let Erin Remember the Days of Old," sung to an old Irish tune, and Emmet declaims, "Oh! that I were at the head of twenty thousand men, marching to that tune!"

"Catholic Emancipation" are the words on every tongue. "The Shan Van Vocht" the song in every throat. Emmet goes to Paris, he receives word to come back to Erin, the hour has struck! It was only a scurvy trick of a former Prime Minister of England to play him as a trump in the sassenach game of beggar my neighbor. Poor Robert was fine and brave but innocent and trusting, his perennial adolescence proved his nemesis, he trusted too many, too much, selfless amid the selfish he was too good to live too long. A malignant fate hounded him. The girl he loved unwittingly betrayed him and went insane. Her father, a brilliant lawyer, refused to defend him and he went to the gallows, briefed by two paid informers of the British Government.

It is a tribute to Miss Landreth's craftsmanship that the reader is able to move without confusion through the combined maze of idealism, malevolence, greed, patriotism, chicanery, and treachery that led to the frustrated rebellion and its tragic aftermath. She writes with a fine sincerity, deep feeling, and a nice understanding of the Irish spirit. Her canvas is necessarily a crowded one, teeming with a multitude of figures swayed by selfish and unselfish impulses, figures whose conflicting temperaments, character, vagaries, mental and emotional compulsions had a powerful impact on the historic destiny of the Isle of Saints and Heroes. Heavily accoutred with documentation and footnotes, armed to the teeth with formidable authorities, "The Pursuit of Robert Emmet" will be well able to defend itself against any future historian who may lack a pair of scales.

Gallantry in the Dark

APPOINTMENT ON THE HILL. By Dorothy Detzer. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1948. 262 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by LILIAN T. MOWRER

THIS book supplies the discerning reader with one reason why the world is in the mess it is today. For it is the moving story of a gallant woman who worked all her life for peace without understanding how peace might be achieved.

Dorothy Detzer lost her beloved twin brother in World War I, and as a young girl plunged into postwar relief work in Austria and famine-racked Russia. She learned the "bitter final fruits of unleashed violence," became an ardent pacifist, and accepted, in 1923, the national secretaryship of the Women's International League of Peace and Freedom.

The founders of the League had written into the name its basic tenet, namely, that peace and freedom are corollaries (a highly debatable point), but whereas the interests of its president, Emily Balch, were international in scope, the American section under Hannah Clothier Hull and the active

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Miss Detzer had a wide range of autonomy unburdened with "the tiresome dogmatisms of the Geneva mentality," as the author expresses it. In her mind peace was not a matter of collective security but depended rather on economic security, good will, and the "deep instinctual ties of women."

Equipped with a high-school education in history and an admitted ignorance of international affairs, Miss Detzer presented at the organization's annual conventions a draft of the policies and action to be followed. Once accepted, it permitted her to function with the League's "full authority," and soon she had joined all the other women on the Hill and become, as she describes it in some very lively chapters, an adept in the art of intercepting, buttonholing, and cajoling Congressmen, seeking to influence this or that bit of legislation, marshalling *her* witnesses to add their testimony to that of all the others at Congressional hearings, and doing all the chores of the regular "lobbyist."

The W.I.L. "took stands" on a variety of subjects, and the quest for peace was sometimes sidetracked in championship of underdogs. Miss Detzer's account of her work for the sharecroppers; her fight to get equality for colored people; the way she went to bat for Franz, an Austrian refugee, and her spirited defense of the Peruvian liberal de la Torre make excellent reading and depict a sensitive, courageous woman unsparing of her efforts to build a better world.

But international affairs were beyond her, as her chapter on the Open Door in China clearly shows. Her admirable initial efforts urging the Administration to invoke the Nine-Power-Pact (violated by Japan with the Mukden incident) bogged down. She accepted the now totally discredited theory that munition makers can and do make wars and dissipated all her energies fighting the industry "whose profits flowed from the coin of blood."

"Appointment on the Hill" is both an inspiration and a warning. It shows the enormous potential power of women and the influence alert and active citizens can exercise on legislation. It also reveals the danger of amateurs in international politics. For peace is not, as Dorothy Detzer maintains, "the byproduct of the creative conditions and the moral dynamics of life." It is the product of law. And short of a jural order it may be precariously maintained only by force.

By insisting upon such sentimental nonsense as the enactment and maintenance of the American neutrality legislation, Miss Detzer and her friends did not prevent World War II. They encouraged it by giving the Axis the impression that we would not move.

The World. *Three important books on Spain: last year's "Report on Spain," by Emmet John Hughes, "The Spanish Story," reviewed below, and Charles Foltz, Jr.'s forthcoming "The Masquerade in Spain"—all of them roughly similar reports on Franco's dictatorship—remind us that, despite constant agitation and the visitation of a global war, Franco is still there. The situation in that uneasy country is much the same as it was ten years ago at the end of the civil war. . . . Readers interested in the European origins of Brazil (see our second review) might read H. V. Livermore's recent "A History of Portugal." Important current books on South America include Arthur P. Whittaker's volume in the American Foreign Policy Library, "The United States and South America: The Northern Republics" (Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia), and Beals's "Lands of the Dawning Tomorrow."*

Documented Duplicity

THE SPANISH STORY. By Herbert Feis. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1948. 282 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by VIRGINIA PEARSON

HERBERT FEIS, advisor of International Economic Affairs of the State Department and first chairman of the Iberian Peninsula Operating Committee, brilliantly tells the story of Franco's relations with us and the Axis during the war. It is an amazing account of documented duplicity. While Britain and the United States supplied credit, food, and oil in the nervous hope of keeping Spain neutral, Franco was secretly committed to the Axis.

What prevented Spain's entry into the conflict? At the close of the Civil War in 1939, Spain was at the end of her resources; Franco's dominant and expressed wish was for five years of peace. Deluded by Hitler into believing war would be avoided until Spain recovered and was militarily prepared, he was shocked and resentful when it was abruptly precipitated by Germany, and Hitler made a pact with the Communists. In the conferences which followed Franco and Hitler failed to agree. Franco demanded the right to decide the time of Spain's entry into the war (he hoped to join in the final phase when Britain was beaten), definite assurances that Gibraltar, French Morocco, and part of Algeria would be awarded him, and that Germany provide food, oil, and arms in advance. Hitler always replied that territorial claims would be settled later; Spain would be sent supplies when she began to fight, and asked that one of the Canary Islands be given Germany as an Atlantic base. This Franco refused to do. On October 23, 1940, the dictators finally signed a protocol at Hendaye and parted with "chilled professions of esteem." These differences were never surmounted.

—*Fitzpatrick in* St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

"We've still won this war, Benito."

Meanwhile Franco was finding neutrality very profitable. Germany's niggardly dribble of supplies forced his dependence upon the hated democracies. When Hitler determined to seize Gibraltar and demanded Spain's entry, he planned using complete German military units to help the Spaniards and insure victory. Franco, aware that his men would not fight under a German commander, refused with the threadbare excuse that he was not ready. Confident of ultimately having his way, Hitler concentrated his attention on Russia, issuing orders to begin preparations for the attack.

By 1942 Spain was prospering, thanks to the Allies. Franco dismissed Serrano Suñer, whose contemptuous treatment of our and Britain's ambassadors was a constant irritant, and appointed pro-Ally Jordana as foreign minister. Germany was placated with secret shipments of wolfram and oil. The Allies had been cognizant of

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this all along but felt the only way to defeat Hitler's efforts to bring Spain into the war was to bolster her economy. When American troops invaded Africa in 1943, Germany was worried. Fearing that Allied soldiers might cross the Straits of Gibraltar or compel Spain to end economic and military favors, Hitler agreed to deliver arms and essential supplies and acceded to Franco's territorial claims —with reservations.

In 1944 the Allies felt the time had come to stop the flow of supplies to Germany from Spain. They determined on a wolfram-buying program, giving Franco the choice of either putting an embargo on shipments to Germany or forfeiting tankers of oil. He reluctantly agreed to a temporary suspension; meanwhile technicians and machinery were rushed to the German-controlled mines to increase production. Sham contracts were signed and the ore smuggled out in trucks. Thus Franco, past master of the doublecross, played us against Germany, kept out of the war, and benefited by it.

Herbert Feis vividly recreates those tense and exciting days when word was momentarily expected that Germany was sweeping through Spain to Gibraltar, the Atlantic, the shores of the Mediterranean, and the African coasts, and explains why the command was never given. "The Spanish Story" is fascinating reading.

Mosaic of a Nation

BRAZIL. Edited by Lawrence F. Hill. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1947. 394 pp. $5.

Reviewed by LOUIS J. HALLE, JR.

THIS is the eighth volume to appear in the United Nations Series presented by the University of California as a contribution to international understanding. Beginning with a survey of Brazil's history in seven chapters, it proceeds to the several aspects of cultural and economic life, and concludes with two chapters of diplomatic history. It is the full-length portrait of a nation in fewer than 400 pages.

The legitimate objective of such a volume, presenting *multum in parvo,* can only be a synthesis of its subject. Like the fourteen lines of a sonnet, the form imposes its own requirements on content. The author of a multi-volume work can separate details and subdivide them, but the author of a small work must take the large view. He must back away and see the whole.

Unfortunately, the editors of this series have chosen the same method of presentation as that employed in the thirteen volumes of the Cambridge Modern History. They have cut their subject up and farmed out the pieces among the experts on each. The nose-and-throat man draws the nose and throat; the eye-and-ear man does the eyes and ears. When the final product is assembled from these pieces, you have a portrait that has a certain authority in its details and rather less in its ensemble. The experts, as was once said of them, have avoided all small errors on their way to the one grand fallacy.

You cannot take a research scholar, whose job is to analyze, and expect him to do a job of synthesis, unless he happens to be exceptional. Too much dependence on experts is a weakness of our age. The separate chapters here, for the most part, illustrate this as well as the whole. In the chapter on agriculture the reader is burdened with production statistics, but he gains no basic general idea of the direction that tropical and other geographical conditions have given to the development of agriculture in Brazil. One of the chapters on history gives hope of entering the realm of intelligent generalization when it opens with the question why Portuguese America remained a unit when Spanish America broke up into separate nations; but the hope is dashed when virtually all the answer offered is that Portuguese America retained a central authority while Spanish America did not.

To be quite fair, this volume has a certain value for reference and review; it assembles scattered information to make it more accessible, and some of its chapters are good in themselves. As the portrait of a nation, however, it represents the failure of a method.

Louis J. Halle, Jr. ["Spring in Washington"] was in Brazil last year en route to Argentina for the Cultural Division of the State Department.

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

HERE COMES THE BRIDE

Ten of fiction's famous brides are briefly described below. Can you name the works in which they appear and the authors who created them? Allowing five points for each correct answer, a score of sixty is par, seventy is very good, and eighty or better is excellent. Answers on page 35.

1. Fifteen minutes after she was married the bride extracted a temperance pledge from her husband.
2. The parson had just pronounced them man and wife, and, as the groom turned to kiss the bride, a shot rang out and she collapsed in his arms.
3. Red as a rose was she.
4. On their honeymoon in Corsica the bride was deliriously happy with her handsome, though stingy, husband, but on the night of their return he resumed his affair with her maid servant.
5. Jilted on her wedding day, this bride-to-be stopped all the clocks in the house at twenty minutes of nine and continued to wear her wedding dress, veil, flowers, and one shoe for the rest of her life.
6. Going up the aisle, the bride dropped her bouquet into a spectator's lap so that he could put a note into it telling him when to meet her after the ceremony.
7. As the bride sat at her dressing table on her wedding day, she mused: "Yes, I am indeed beautiful! Sometimes I sit and wonder why it is that I am so much more attractive than anybody else in the whole world."
8. When a portly and middle-aged woman married a sixteen-year-old boy she performed the wedding ceremony herself, for she was a traveling preacher.
9. On her wedding night the bride stabbed the groom and then went mad.
10. Her feet beneath her petticoat like little mice stole in and out as if they feared the light.

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Belles-Lettres.

Hypersensitive to noise, to smells, even to the fragrance of his beloved hawthornes in bloom, Marcel Proust became at the age of thirty-five a recluse living in a cork-lined room, sallying out only late at night. For seventeen years he slaved in solitude at his great novel, "Remembrance of Things Past." He died in 1922. *Near the end he lived on drugs—veronal in order to sleep, adrenalin and caffein in order to write. Such was the sensitivity of the man that only thirty-five years of active life had given him the materials for seven volumes interpreting a generation of French society. . . . Paul Rosenfeld, too, was a profoundly sensitive man, whose very sensitivity explained his pervasive influence in American artistic circles. We review below a volume of appreciative essays by the writers and musicians he had inspired during his lifetime.*

Fusion of Dualities

THE TWO WORLDS OF MARCEL PROUST. By Harold March. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 1948. 276 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by MARJORIE BRACE

MARCEL PROUST was one of those protean writers who elude critical summation. "Remembrance of Things Past" is a prose symphony on the theme of time, a panoramic and architectural lamentation and satire upon a dying society, an intricately related cluster of psychological analyses and dramas. Proust was a great innovator in novelistic technique, and he composed an almost magically enchanting work of art that is also a monumental definition of the philosophy and psychology of art itself.

Most critical treatment has been sketchy, or singled out one aspect of Proust for comment. Mr. March's intelligent study attempts a complete portrait. It includes many of Proust's letters, and the only well-documented life of Proust available in England. This alone makes the book immensely valuable.

Proust's work, says Mr. March, sought to encompass two worlds: "the world of time, where illusion, suffering, change, and decay are the law; and the world of eternity, where there is freedom, beauty, peace." Proust's approach to the world he knew in time was double. He dissected society as might a witty anthropologist; when he analyzed love he wrote like a peculiarly rhapsodic psychiatrist. He was skeptical about the entire truth of either reason or emotion. They intertwined in the intellectual complexity and serpentine beauty of his long sentences. Reality, Proust thought, could never be captured in immediate experience, which is always deceptive, since it exists in time. Truth may be apprehended only in convergencies of memory, unswayed by suffering; only in intuitive perception of the transcendent essence of relationships that have ceased to be in time.

Throughout Mr. March's book, Proust's theme is discussed as a philosophic problem. Proust's resolution made art the supreme avenue to knowable reality. In the conflict between world and spirit, art alone possesses human life itself, which is time, in timelessness. Proust was thus a kind of secular Buddha, contemplating a Nirvana not of spirit but of this world, meditating on human rather than divine love, and it was this mingling of renunciation with sensuality that produced the only apparent disparities of work that combined probing intellect, surging emotion, and marmoreal calm.

Mr. March, like all critics, has a bias. He tells the story of Proust's suffering life: invalidism, homosexuality, paralyzing neurotic conflict; but his efforts to interpret Proust's autobiographical work in relation to that life are not very profound. As the emphasis of this review indicates, his primary focus is upon Proust's fusion of philosophic dualities.

That Proust's thought was rooted in a passivity incommensurate with a concept of knowing as action does not at all invalidate the truth of his theory of essence as the substance of art. It does distort his applications. It is true that the functioning artist seeks a wholeness unattainable in experience, but where one artist's essence of things may be found in receptivity, another's may be dynamic. Neither is it provable that no-pain would approximate reality any more closely than all-pain; nor is emotional fulfilment within direct experience necessarily an illusory ideal.

Proust's idea of reality as perceivable only in contemplative associations created a work that is exalting, but in entirety fatiguing; having somewhat the quality of a life confined within libraries, museums, and concert halls. It is concentratedly beautiful, but its meaning is ultimately inseparable from its consummate illumination and illustration of the nature and the goal of the creative impulse.

This meaning is clearly discerned in Mr. March's exposition. His intellectual enthusiasm, however, often verges upon a confusion of Proust's esthetic mysticism with a philosophic ordering of life, though upon such terms its social and ethical inadequacies are obvious.

Personal Code

By Gustav Davidson

SILENT or singing
In nongregarious ease,
Seeking no cynic to convert
Or tyrant to appease,

I swear by nothing final
Or holy or secure,
Knowing all is fable
And only dying sure.

For me the road of hazard,
The lone man's staff and rod;
No straight way or narrow—
Though it should lead to God.

The Power of Love

PAUL ROSENFELD: VOYAGER IN THE ARTS. Edited by Jerome Mellquist and Lucie Wiese. New York: Creative Age Press, Inc. 1948. 284 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by GILBERT CHASE

IT IS easy to find fault with the late Paul Rosenfeld as a critic. He was impressionistic in an age that aspires to make its criticism "scientific," his style is over-lush for our taste, and one notes (in the words of a contributor to this volume) "the lack of technical scholarship and of rigorous self-discipline." Yet these shortcomings, if such they be, seem irrelevant beside the fact that Paul Rosenfeld was "a great and kindly man, a sincere and amazingly honest man," whose critical creed was based on love and who believed in art with unwavering faith. "Doubt anything but art," he said to a friend.

"Sometimes," he wrote in 1943, "one feels the possibility of a love of life which asks no reward other than the power of love." This was the secret of his own power. It was this power

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of love that enabled him to enter the mind of the artist and often actually to assist in the creative process. The correspondence with Sherwood Anderson, included in this volume, is revealing in this respect: Anderson repeatedly expresses gratitude for the spiritual nourishment he received from Rosenfeld. This sort of testimony is multiplied, in varying degrees, by a host of other artists — novelists, poets, composers, painters—who contribute to this collection of posthumous tributes. The table of contents reads like a "who's who" of contemporary American arts and letters.

This book is well-named, for Rosenfeld was a perpetual voyager among the arts—and no other critic of our times was more at home among *all* the arts. Though not a trained musician, music was the field of his predilection, and several American composers now famous were first "discovered" by him. One of these, Aaron Copland, who points out that, instead of observing the work of musical art with detachment, Rosenfeld "completely involved himself in the very music he was criticizing." This is a shrewd observation that underscores both a strength and a weakness. Another composer, William Schuman, remarks that Rosenfeld's interest in his music "declined in direct proportion to the increased recognition received." Or, as he puts it, when others began to climb on the bandwagon, Rosenfeld jumped off—headed for new discoveries, no doubt.

In the long view, it may be misleading to think of Paul Rosenfeld primarily as a critic. Waldo Frank may be very near the truth when he calls "Musical Portraits" "an authentic and organic work of literary art." Rosenfeld was a literary artist whose medium of expression was the critical essay. The sensations provided by his vibrant temperament and his extraordinary sensibility furnished the materials for his art. It is perhaps trite to say that he also made an art of living, yet that is the only way to explain the lifelong attachment of so many gifted friends, all of whom found his companionship stimulating and inspiring.

To read this book is not only to share an act of homage: it is to relive a period in American culture that is already closed, though it seems so near to us in time. In later years, Rosenfeld had articles rejected because they were "not interesting to the mass of the people." He did not move with the times. His voyage was set for a true course that could not deviate.

Gilbert Chase, supervisor of music for the NBC University of the Air, is writing an interpretive history of music in the United States.

Down from the Literary Left Wing

CROSS SECTION 1948: A Collection of New American Writing. Edited by Edwin Seaver. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1948. 457 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

THE MANUSCRIPTS submitted for Mr. Seaver's fourth annual anthology of "new writing" are, he honestly says, fewer in number and less creative in diversity and vitality than hitherto; and, he adds, any book editor, any book critic, must have been aware of the same general conditions. He further remarks that the publishers are worried because people aren't buying books more extensively and suggests that "maybe the people simply weren't interested in the books being offered them." Few editors of anthologies are thus candid as they beat the drum and blow the trumpet in front of the booth where they display their wares.

Mr. Seaver has assembled (despite this drouth) a total of twenty-one items for his collection. He divides these into five sections, but I shall differ from him by dividing them into two: fiction (short) and criticism. The criticism is confined to two numbers—a savage rhetorical attack on Mr. Philip Wylie, who seems to deserve this kind of onslaught; and a pontifical utterance about literature in general by Isidor Schneider that rather escapes my understanding. Neither item adds to the stature of the collection.

—Photograph by Alfred Stieglitz, Courtesy of An American Place.

"When others began to climb on the bandwagon, Paul Rosenfeld jumped off."

The remaining nineteen units are, in effect, short stories, or at any rate stories which are short. The opening exhibit, "The Pismire Plan," by Jessamyn West, is a somewhat slow-moving but nevertheless pugnacious satire on Southern California, where everything pretends to be something else, with the result that there are no buyers; and George Pismire makes a fortune by hiring buyers and renting them out as patrons to institutions like "The Doggy Diner" and the "Isle of the Departed," where the corpses of deceased Americans depart via the "River of Memories" to the Los Angeles Sewage Disposal Farm (or at any rate the water in the artificial river departs that way). This is excellent fooling; but it would be improved if it were half as long.

The trouble about most of the rest of these stories is that there is no lift, no rise to them. In one, a bereaved father has to adjust himself to the requirements of taking care of a motherless little boy. In another, a father almost kills a little boy because he doesn't know how to take care of him. In a third, a mother-in-law interferes in a budding middle-age romance between her daughter-in-law and a mediocre male. In a fourth, a roving rural Romeo gets biffed on the bean by an outraged husband. In a fifth, a war casualty scoffs at everybody else and finds escape in the Wars of the Roses. In a sixth, the wandering American GI's turn Rome into a sunny-tempered brothel. And so on. And so on.

These fictional units are all carefully polished, not after the manner of *The Saturday Evening Post* but after the manner of *Story* magazine, *The New Yorker*, or one of the current little magazines. There is nothing wrong with them; the difficulty is that, the first story aside (together with certain scenes in the Rome piece), there is nothing compellingly right with them. No character sticks out as Sherlock Holmes or Falstaff or Little Eva or Chicot the Jester or Sancho Panza or Ulysses sticks out of the literary work which contains him. The writers are like broody hens, and the unregenerate reader comes by and by to feel smothered by their gallinaceous warmth, their close, monotonous nesting.

There is a formula for the slick magazines; but there is also a formula for the literary left-wing, which both bedazzles and bedevils these honest, painful, and highly respectable penmen. Less technical skill and more elementary exuberance seems to be what the new writing stands in need of.

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Published by The Saturday Review Associates, Inc., 25 West 45th Street, New York 19, N. Y., Harrison Smith, President; J. R. Cominsky, Executive Vice President and Treasurer; Amy Loveman, Secretary

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Woman and the Male Animal

A SHORT TIME after its publication male critics from varied professions, medical, legal, and scientific, all over the country surveyed Dr. Alfred Kinsey's "Sexual Behavior in the Human Male" with a notable lack of indignation, moral or otherwise. The varied sexual outlets, whether socially or ecclesiastically sanctioned or not, and the impressive and solemn tables of periodicity, properly arranged in rural and urban groups and on graded economic levels, were assumed to be satisfactorily authentic and scientific. On the average intelligent male who was not privileged to write about it the book had a chilling and awesome effect; the laboriously ribald jokes that pass as humor among unregenerate males fell flat or were silenced at the abysmal revelation of man's ultimate fall from grace. Sired by the Medical Division of the Rockefeller Institute, and brought to birth by an old and respected medical publishing house, its overwhelmingly respectable ancestry, combined with its startling title, gave it a news value not unlike the tabloid's headline "Socialite Heiress Caught in Love Nest." It was immediately obvious that the Rockefeller Foundation and the W. B. Saunders Company, after an uproarious and lucrative cackling, had laid a golden egg that might be worth its weight in platinum or plutonium, to say nothing of its effect on our laws and mores.

So far, almost no women have publicly had their say about the famous Kinsey Report, though there was no way of keeping them from it, from the time the first husband brought it surreptitiously home, and, after some hemming and hawing, handed it over to his wife, with a grin that might mean almost anything from, "I'd like to know what you really think," to "It's about time you discovered I'm not so bad after all." Now that the book has become a top best seller of the country, in spite of its forbidding price, it can be assumed that half or more of its readers are women. The manager of a large New York bookstore has assured us that at least fifty per cent of the people who put down six-fifty on the barrelhead are women, and mostly young women, and furthermore that it is bought with more assurance and less beating around the bush than the average man displays. Nevertheless, our inquiry of its publisher in Philadelphia brought the answer that, among the collected mass of clippings they have received, there is almost nothing women have written or publicly said about a book in which they are so vitally interested.

There are signs that a flood of protest from the distaff side will soon make its appearance. An editorial article in the May issue of one of the largest women's magazines states its position and asks for the opinions of its readers. It seems that youth is no bar to reading the Kinsey Report and that boys and girls in high school, and maybe younger tots, solemnly discuss it amongst themselves. Why should children, who are forbidden liquor, the writer asks, be permitted access to a report whose real significance and intention will escape them and on whom only its astonishing revelations will make an impression? Why was the book so elaborately promoted that it became familiar to tens of thousands of households? In what a Washington newspaper calls a scathing denunciation of the Kinsey statistics, Mrs. Eugene Meyer, writer and wife of the chairman of the board of *The Washington Post*, is quoted as saying, "We all know that there is too much sexual promiscuity, marital infidelity, and homosexuality in our country. What does it add to our knowledge to know the exact percentage in each of these three areas? . . . This attempt to equate us with the animals by statistics is as revolting as it is silly."

There will be no hint of Victorian prudery in what women have to say about Dr. Kinsey's labors on behalf of the animal nature of the human male. In fact, as one listens to women discussing the Report in mixed company, the conclusion is inescapable that men are more reticent, more frightened, or shy of what are known as "the facts of life" than women. This is not a new discovery, but with many other arguments about the differences between the sexes, this old dispute is being revived. Women and girls are the realists, it appears, men and boys the sentimental romanticists, and why not, since it is the female of the family whose duty it is to clean up the sink, diaper the baby, and take care of brother or father when they come staggering home from fraternity or lodge meeting.

The daring and unvarnished sex talk and discussion in the Twenties and later were the result of the impact of Freud and Jung on women readers, or on those who had to take their troubles to the psychoanalyst. For lack of new fuel this conversational gambit had fallen into disuse for a decade or more. It can be noted that the wide dispersal of the Kinsey Report has revived sex as parlor conversation, this time more impersonally.

The famous report can only with difficulty be used as a more acceptable form of gossip about one's friends' private lives and personal misadventure. Since it is devoted exclusively to the male animal, whose sins are usually taken for granted by the nicest women; and since its tables of periodicity and so on can only with the greatest circumlocution be applied to one's absent best friend, talk centered on Dr. Kinsey's tables must consist of generalities, or be devoted to the habits of an unnamed acquaintance whom one met years ago. There is something extraordinarily revealing about these conversations. It is shown in the average man's embarrassment, his concealed and almost pathetic pride in the discovery of the frightening virility of the sex of which he is both the vain inheritor and the guilty transgressor. It can be seen in the woman's calm acceptance of her immemorial role as the tamer and trainer of wild animals of all ages in the household, until the little boys cease from bloodying each others' noses, and the over-virile young male becomes the stolid father.

It is safe to say that women will discover nothing that is new to them in the Kinsey Report. They are the readers of the latest books on psychiatry and on how to avoid and watch for the sexual complexes that hover like gremlins or bad fairies over their children's heads. They are the repository for household secrets that father never hears about. He can come home, inspect the garden, smile at a placid and happy family, eat his dinner in peace, and settle down to the evening newspaper without knowledge of the fires that may be alive under the surface. When the Kinsey Report has become a forgotten interlude in his life, he can peacefully rest until the next book of the series, Dr. Kinsey's report on the human female, arouses him with a jolt from which he may never recover. H. S.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Wecter, Pro & Con

SIR: Dixon Wecter's Apr. 10 ["Can Metaphysics Save the World?"] article was one of the brightest, shrewdest, and most quietly devastating *SRL* has carried in a long time.

WILLIAM HARLAN HALE.

New York, N. Y.

SIR: I wish to protest Mr. Wecter's article. There is the questionable organization of the piece with its imposing array of unjustified, emptily satirical statements. The disjoint between the title and contents is one of my minor objections but just why isn't the title "Mr. Weaver: Example of the Half-Baked Chicagoans"? Mr. Wecter immediately launches into a satirical but growingly overt denunciation of the University of Chicago which he admittedly cannot justify by criticisms of Hutchins but must substantiate by an attack on Weaver. Nowhere is there any discussion of the questions suggested in the title.

Certainly the weakness of criticizing Chicago through Weaver as one would criticize Christianity through the Bible is apparent. Weaver is just a faculty member who wrote a book. Previous criticisms I have heard of this school have often been on the grounds that it was a radical nest rather than a reactionary institution.

Grammar and rhetoric are not "exalted." Naturally those whom the pitiful high-school grammar courses have left without knowledge of the parts of these are required to ground themselves in the more obvious fundamentals. But the main purpose of our English courses is to teach good, clean, simple expository writing. Rhetoric has little part in them. . . .

GUY L. COOPER.

Chicago, Ill.

Just Half-Baked

SIR: In *SRL* April 10, the compositor has me describe Mr. Weaver's book "Ideas Have Consequences" as "half-naked." Among many quarrels which I picked with the book I did not intend to charge it with indecent exposure. It is well-garbed—in what E. A. Robinson called "the medieval grace of iron clothing." The word I wrote was "half-baked." Also, the editorial note incorrectly describes me as director of research at the Huntington Library; I am chairman of the research group. Still further, a book of mine called "The Hero in America" was not written in collaboration. Homer nods, and even the *SRL* sometimes slips a cog.

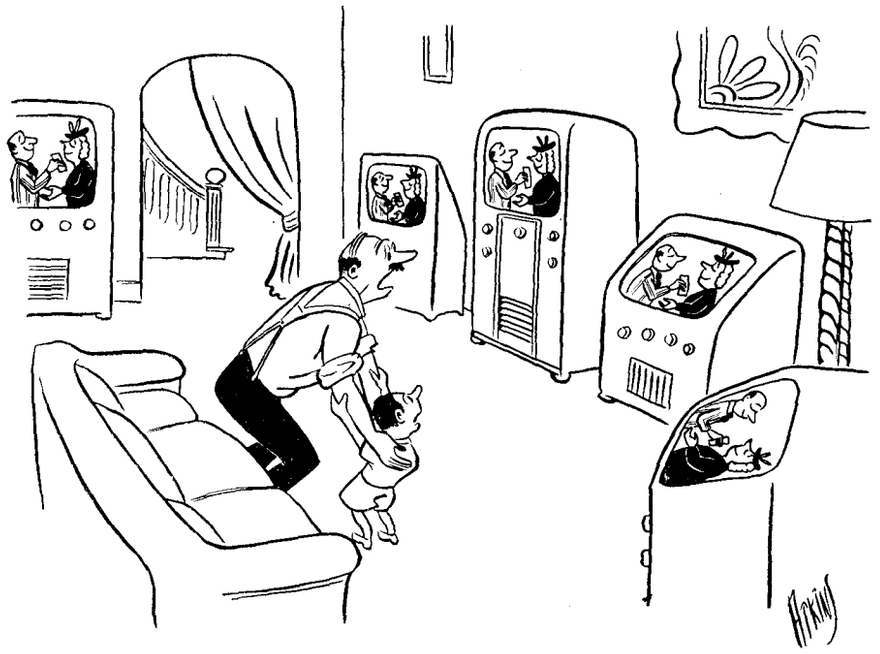
DIXON WECTER.

Philadelphia, Pa.

"Miracles"

SIR: May I add a belated postscript to T. V. Smith's review of C. S. Lewis's "Miracles" [*SRL* Jan. 31]?

I am struck first of all by the contrast between Lewis's sober and closely reasoned argument, and the passionate rhetoric of Mr. Smith. Lewis writes like a philosopher; your reviewer like an evangelical preacher who sees his tidy view of the world threatened by a hideous heresy.



"Good heavens, Junior, your mother just won *another* television set."

The tone of Mr. Smith's review doubtless mirrors the genuine anguish he felt at an assault against his simple faith. I grant that it is very comfortable to believe in a universe which is (or soon will be) completely explained by science—a universe immune to nasty intrusions by the supernatural. Such a matter-of-fact universe makes it possible to plan one's life without worrying about unpredictable complications. I only fear—as Lewis shows—that such a domesticated and cozy universe is not very plausible, and that willy-nilly we have to reckon with outside intervention.

CHAD WALSH.

Beloit, Wis.

Samuel, Not John Wesley

SIR: Mr. Benét appears to have laid an egg in THE PHOENIX NEST Mar. 27. "The Organist in Heaven," the lyric by T. E. Brown he so rightly admires, is not about John Wesley but about Samuel Wesley, the son of his brother Charles. He was the best known of three fairly distinguished bearers of the name in the immediate family connection. A facile composer of hymns and oratorios in the style of his time, he was also immensely popular as an extemporaneous performer on the pipe organ.

A. PAULINE LOCKLIN.

State College, Pa.

"He Shines and Stinks"

SIR: The last sentence of Robert S. Allen's review of "Jim Farley's Story" [*SRL* Mar. 13] is: "He is now deader than Webster's famed mackerel that 'glitters and stinks in the moonlight'." It was not Webster, but John Randolph of Roanoke who said: "Fellow citizens,—he is a man of splendid abilities, but utterly corrupt. Like rotten mackerel by moonlight, he shines and stinks." It is usually said that Randolph was referring to his arch-enemy, Henry Clay, but he really applied the invective to Edward Livingston.

WALTER P. ARMSTRONG.

Memphis, Tenn.

Thin Weapon

SIR: I read Sister M. Robertine's letter of cancelation [*SRL* Mar. 20] three times before I could believe my eyes. I fear the "young girls of good families," graduating from St. Joseph's into "a world teeming with problems of adult life," will find "unsophistication" a thin weapon if they ever step outside the door.

DOROTHY O. O'NEILL.

Effingham, Ill.

World Enthrallment

SIR: As one who has fought for peace on every field, may I venture the opinion that the admirable Preliminary Draft for Global Federation [*SRL* Apr. 3] has two foundational defects that make it wobbly?

First, it commits the all-too-common error ("universal peace is the prerequisite") of regarding peace as a means and not as a result, something that we must deserve. It is comparable with a man stranded on an atoll with an excellent manual telling him how to build a boat.

Second, and this is even more crucial, the program is obviously what might be called sui-theistic. Yet there is one thing, and one thing only (I write as a scholar) that will guarantee world freedom, and that is world enthralment: conscription to the Not-Ourselves. This is the one practical fact, that we must confront.

A. E. JOHNSON.

Syracuse, N. Y.

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Seeing Things

BRATS AND BLUEPRINTS

THE CAUSES for laughter being fairly scarce in the world just now, moviegoers cannot but be the more grateful for two such films as "Sitting Pretty"* and "Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House."** Both of these are light comedies. Both are dexterously written, played, and directed. Both deal with subjects that Professor Toynbee would unquestionably consider trivial. Yet there is more truth in these smiling films than can be found in most of Hollywood's serious efforts.

Who can say where the frivolous stops and the serious begins? Often they are no more than ends of the same stick. A frown maintained too long becomes ridiculous, precisely as a smile which never gives way to gravity can be dangerous.

No doubt Horace Walpole congratulated himself upon the distinction he made when he pointed out, "Life is a comedy to the man who thinks and a tragedy to the man who feels." But Walpole's aphorism satisfies us less than it pleased him. Most of us are not as compartmented as he seemed to believe. We cannot say with any exactness when we have ceased to feel and begun to think. We tend to think our feelings even as we feel our thoughts. On the subject of comedy, a subject which is apt to lose its laughter the very moment it is analyzed, we are certain of one thing. To enjoy a joke we must understand its point. Let a child overhear adults laughing at a story which is beyond either his vocabulary or his experience and he will say, "What's funny? I don't get it." Getting it is an essential part of the fun.

That is one reason why "Sitting Pretty" and "Mr. Blandings" prove irresistible. There is no avoiding recognition of what they are about. You need never have depended upon a sitter to win an evening's freedom or dreamed of buying a house in the country to be included in their gaiety. They speak as directly to the childless or the nurse-equipped as they do to the most contented of city-dwellers.

Time and again these columns have complained about Hollywood's habit of divorcing its films from life and creating, in the name of specious glamor, an overrich, overdressed dream world—a sort of Celluloidia—in which reality plays no part. It is a world of escape; a world where characters seldom cease to be characters and become people. Its doors are apt to be barred on rent, school, and wash-day worries. It is a land where the make-up man is careful to paint humanity out and mannikins in. Its women are not women but magazine covers. They have the contours of volcanoes; their mouths are crimson banners; their eyelashes long as awnings. The men of this lush and chromiumed universe drive only the newest and shiniest cars. Regardless of the professions they follow, they work on schedules as free as Casanova's in which to pursue or be pursued. The homes they live in are as swollen as their owners' budgets. In them kitchens are the size of amphitheatres, hall-bedrooms take on the dimensions of terminals, and suburban boudoirs belong less to housewives than to Du Barrys. Inevitably such a world excludes rather than includes practically all movie-goers. It may invite them to realize their dreams, but it does not often permit them to recognize their lives.

A VIRTUE which "Sitting Pretty" and "Mr. Blandings" can claim is that both films in their different ways make such recognition possible. They are about average people who live in average homes and are troubled by worries well within the grasp or experience of everyone who sees them. That is the source of their fun. And a welcome source it proves to be.

I have not as yet read "Belvedere," but from one of its warm admirers I gather that "Sitting Pretty" takes many liberties with Gwen Davenport's novel. The screen play apparently forgets the war anguishes of what one reviewer described as "the woman behind the man behind the man behind the gun." Instead, it concentrates, quite amusingly, on an elaborate plot about a genius who, though he hates children with the passion of a male interior decorator, answers an ad in

"He must be in here somewhere!"

*SITTING PRETTY. Screen play by F. Hugh Herbert based upon "Belvedere," a novel by Gwen Davenport. Directed by Walter Lang. Produced by Sam Engel. With a cast including Robert Young, Maureen O'Hara, Clifton Webb, Richard Haydn, Ed Begley, etc. A Twentieth Century-Fox Production.

**MR. BLANDINGS BUILDS HIS DREAM HOUSE. Screen play by Norman Panama and Melvin Frank based upon the novel of the same name by Eric Hodgins. Directed by H. C. Potter. Presented by Dore Schary. With a cast including Cary Grant, Myrna Loy, Melvin Douglas, Reginald Denny, Jason Robards, etc. An RKO-Radio Production released through Selznick Releasing Organization.

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the *SRL* for a baby sitter and writes a best seller while subduing the obstreperous offspring of a young middle-class family.

Belvedere, the genius in question, is a Sheridan Whiteside of the nursery. He has the same formidable lack of manners, the same talent for insult. Moreover, he is played by Clifton Webb with the identical acidity Mr. Webb brought to the Chicago company of "The Man Who Came to Dinner." But, entertaining though Belevedere is as written and acted, I, at least, found "Sitting Pretty" at its most amusing when it dealt with the rigors of baby sitting rather than with Belvedere's eccentricities or the complications created for him by a small-town gossip. I was sorry when the film edged away from its true subject, which is baby sitting, and became a contrived farce. After all, in present-day servantless America baby sitting is one of the nation's major industries. As such, it deserves chronicling in its own right.

Fortunately, "Mr. Blandings" does not deviate from its theme to the same degree. Though very diverting, it owes its laughs to its undeniable—indeed, its terrifying—documentary- quality. It is as true to the woes of a city family that dares to buy a place in the country as was Eric Hodgins's book. It is directed with gay imagination by H. C. Potter, and expertly acted by Cary Grant and Melvyn Douglas. It is also blessed by Myrna Loy's presence. Miss Loy's skill as a comedienne is effortless and all-conquering. In addition, hers is the merit of being uncommonly good-looking and yet creating the illusion of an everyday woman.

The truth is that "Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House" is precisely the comedy George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart hoped to write in "George Washington Slept Here." It, too, deals with that perilous buttercup urge which in the spring will overtake and seduce sane mortals who, until then, have loved their lives in comfortable metropolises. It, too, narrates the misadventures invited by those sufficiently unwise to foreswear the pleasures of the city for the costly risks of building in the country. But unlike "George Washington Slept Here," which was funny mainly as an idea, "Mr. Blandings" is funny both as an idea and in its execution.

No doubt the reason for this is that "Mr. Blandings" stays closer to personal experience. Its ordeals seem less invented than survived. Moreover, they have been shared by so many home-builders that most moviegoers cannot help but know that what they are laughing at is the truth.

JOHN MASON BROWN.

"A SMASH HIT." — Life Magazine
RICHARD RODGERS & OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN 2nd present
ETHEL MERMAN
In The Musical Smash
"ANNIE GET YOUR GUN"
Music and Lyrics by IRVING BERLIN
Book by HERBERT and DOROTHY FIELDS
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The LAUGH HIT
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FICTION

(*Continued from page 13*)

He is amusing, cynical, bitter, and he makes money writing children's books with his tongue in his cheek. Another highly objectionable friend has found an easy way to escape from his conscience. An artist in an advertising agency, he has swallowed Marx and Lenin whole, and in company regurgitates the Communist credo to prove to himself that he is after all among the angels. One of his phrases is: "Let's get together some night and have a good dialetical workout."

Ellen, Leonard's artist wife, expresses honestly the disillusionment of the painter and sculptor who cannot make a living. "To make the long, long ride into the future," she says, "simply to apologize for the past hardly seems worth while." But in a sense her lot is more fortunate than her husband's; an unsold painting can at least hang on the studio wall and be admired by those who have no money to buy; it can even serve the purpose of hiding a hole in the plaster, while a piece of sculpture makes a fine doorstop. But the pages of an unwanted manuscript are, after all, only spoiled sheets of paper.

Mr. Goldknopf's characters are so sharply patterned that they somehow resemble the figures in a morality tale; they express almost too fluently the ideas and words that automatically belong to their roles. It is almost too much to expect of a man, despondent and angry with his wife, to utter anything quite as good as Leonard's observation: "A husband has many obligations, but being great isn't one of them." Or: "A fortunate few can make compromises without compromising themselves. Those are the great statesmen."

But who can object if the author has lightened his dismal subject and relieved the burden of doom on his characters with wit and flashes of humor? This is a book worth owning, for in it the reader can see the hope and the cynicism of the young men who have come out of the war and are trying to steer their interrupted or shattered lives toward art and fame and fortune.

Evil Bond

MY FRIEND THE ENEMY. By Frank Baker. New York: Coward-McCann, Inc. 1948. 246 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by EDWIN FADIMAN, JR.

MR. BAKER'S tale clicks neatly into place among those ultra-thrillers of which "Angel Street," "Rebecca," and C. S. Forester's "Payment Deferred" furnish familiar and excellent examples. In this genre, more successfully cultivated by the English than by ourselves, the reader's interest is directed not to the crime, nor to the clues, nor even to the action, but rather to some odd twist of the criminal's mind, or, even more sharply, to some special atmosphere of horror or tension the novelist conjures up.

Mr. Baker (whose curious first novel, "Miss Hargreaves," some may remember) has here contrived a thoroughly unpleasant psychological melodrama. This unpleasantness, however, is interesting because it is so deliberately contrived. The narrator is a playwright, Morgan Vale, whose unattractive, weak, and unhappy character has been in part determined by a central experience of his childhood. At school he had for three years been bullied by a slightly older schoolmate, Vincent Collins, precociously adept in cruelty. The tortures Vale underwent—and which, significantly, he never resisted—have mutilated him mentally for life, making him unconsciously seek both to be victimized and, in imitation of his torturer, to exercise domination.

At a house party (this is 1935) Collins reenters Vale's life and the two automatically, despite Vale's horror of the situation, fall into the groove of their old relationship. Fear and guilt draw them together, in a queasy twinship of the soul. Master and slave they now are again, as if they were still schoolboys. Their lives become intermingled; the bond strengthens; the tension increases.

At last Vale learns that the evil in Collins has exploded. Collins is twice a murderer. But Vale cannot bring himself to expose his master; he must somehow identify himself with Collins's own misery. Collins stages a fake suicide, under conditions that torment Vale as effectively as any schoolboy hazing. He tries to get Vale to kill him, as the only way out of a disgrace which by this time seems Vale's as well as his own. The morbidity of the curious battle between the two wretched men intensifies. They are joined together by common suffering, by their dreadful need for each other, by the evil which works in them both.

The book closes with Collins's death at a rope's end and with the now completely destroyed Vale reflecting moodily on the meaning of the life of "his friend, the enemy": ". . . a chain of circumstances outside my control brought to a criminal's death the only person I have ever really loved. Nothing in this narrative would seem to be evidence of that statement. But in my heart I know it to be so. And then it seems to me that cruelty is at the very heart of the universe. But where is this heart to be found, where is the very core of the world's being, if it is not in ourselves?"

Mr. Baker is no Dostoievsky, and it is probably true that some of his psychological and spiritual explorations are murky rather than profound, unclear rather than subtle. His story, also, would have benefited from shortening; he does not seem to have quite enough material for a full-bodied novel. (The theatre-background scenes, though cleverly and knowingly handled, seem a trifle gratuitous.) Finally, the situation he depicts is so special that a great many readers may find it unconvincing. Others, however, may discover in it a curious attraction, and a troubling insight into the nature of that thin partition which separates love from hatred.

One should add that Mr. Baker writes well indeed. One hopes that his smooth narrative gift may soon be exercised on material that will appeal to the reader as a little less Grand Guignol and perhaps a little closer to the general interests of ordinary human beings.

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Kit Gerado, Pirate

THE GOLDEN HAWK. By Frank YERBY. New York: The Dial Press. 1948. 346 pp. $3.

Reviewed by ROBERT PICK

WHAT is a reviewer to do with an historical novel he knows will make the best-seller list (possibly its top), and whose story and dialogue he honestly thinks are but slightly above the level of the romantic-erotic type of comic strips (though, of course, far more verbose)? Is he to prove he's a good sport by typing off a string of non-committal sentences, throwing in a few condescending adjectives for good measure, and getting it over with a mumbled *cui malo?*

I don't know. I really don't know what to do with this story of Kit Gerado, a French-Spanish buccaneer who—accompanied by a great-hearted Jew converted to Catholicism in late-seventeenth-century Spain *(sic)*—roves the Caribbean and its shores in nearly exclusive pursuit of his lust for revenge and his amorous fancy—the latter oscillating between a red-haired English gentlewoman turned pirate herself, and the fiancée and later wife of a grandee who, back in Spain, had killed Kit's mother and ultimately turns out to be his own father.

I know, however, what to make of passages like these (which so richly sprinkle the pages of the present opus):

> That red-haired sea witch was never subdued! She came wading through the surf naked as a newborn, with a knife in her teeth, and . . .

Or:

> The girl's black eyes flashed somber fire. "You would not dare!" she spat.
>
> "Would I not?" Kit asked softly. Then, turning to Bernardo, he said, "Bring me the whip!"
>
> Bernardo hesitated, searching Kit's face. But the blue eyes were impassive. Shrugging, Bernardo went forward, and returned after a moment with the weighted lash. Kit slipped the loop over his wrist and played the nine-foot lash along the deck. The girl hung there, her face ghost-white, staring at it in breathless fascination . . .

In short, I feel that the enormous popularity of printed material of this kind constitutes a case for the sociologist rather than for the book reviewer. If, as a book reviewer, I am asked whether—all literary judgment put aside—I had at least some fun with "The Golden Hawk," I must confess I had none. But as it happens, I don't particularly enjoy the "romantic" species of comics either.

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Ideas and Studies.

The earliest civilizations, as Dr. Speiser points out below, were highly integrated, and the local conception of Church and State "embraced everything that was significant in nature and society." Again, among the primitives studied in Howells's "The Heathens," religion was an indispensable part of the tight-knit social organization. Society today, richer and more complex, has lost the earlier close integration of beliefs and practices, and has suffered thereby. Yet a trend in reverse, towards the creation of a more unified society, is discernible. Science, for example, is groping towards philosophy and ethics, and the historians increasingly employ the concepts of science. An example of the new thought is L. L. Whyte's attempt at a unitary philosophy in "The Next Development in Man," reviewed by Lewis Mumford in SRL *April 24. Whyte is, significantly, a scientist.*

Mesopotamian vs. Egyptian Way

KINGSHIP AND THE GODS: By Henri Frankfort. University of Chicago Press. 1948. 444 *pp.* 43 *plates.* $5.

Reviewed by E. A. SPEISER

CHURCH and state in the world's oldest civilizations — Egypt and Mesopotamia—were awesome factors to which all else was held subordinate. Together they embraced everything that was significant in nature and society. The gods personified natural order. The keystone of social order was the king. The manner in which nature and society, or the gods and kingship, were integrated was the basic norm of civilized life. Meaningful existence was unthinkable without such integration.

The extent to which those fundamental experiences of mankind which we know as the cultures of Egypt and Mesopotamia were bound up with government and religion is brought out fully in the latest book from the pen of Professor Henri Frankfort of the University of Chicago. Like all his other studies, this contribution is a happy blend of insight and learning, enthusiasm and analysis. Many details in this challenging account are certain to be subjected to critical onslaught—in some instances not without valid reason. The over-all pattern, however, has been securely established.

Perhaps the most striking of Frankfort's results is the clear demonstration that, for all their intimate contacts which go back to remote prehistoric times, the Egyptian and the Mesopotamian ways of life were not closely related. To the contrary, their underlying philosophies were poles apart. The fundamental contrast between the two ancient centers of progress has come to be appreciated only in the past few years, reversing

many of our traditional beliefs. Art, law, and literature have furnished the necessary clues. Frankfort himself has been one of the pioneers in this exciting reconstruction. The book before us presents the combined results, but the author's own share is incomparably the largest. In briefest outline, his findings are as follows:

In Egypt, the universe was the outcome of a single creative process. The demiurge continued his absolute rule on earth through a king in whom the creator was perpetually incarnate. The king was thus himself a god and his world was as stable as the immutable rhythm of the Nile. Because the land was ruled by a divine mediator, the alignment of nature and society was perfect and complete. In this static cosmos, unveiled in serene splendor, there could be no room for insecurity and human frailty. Even the reality of death was denied. Festivals were but occasions for reaffirming that all was well with the world. History itself was little more than a series of accidents—a most illuminating observation in view of the Egyptian's notorious lack of historical perspective.

In Mesopotamia, on the other hand, creation was the outcome of violence and confusion. Life was in constant flux, a process as restless as the activity of the Tigris and the Euphrates, their silt unceasingly forming new land at the head of the Persian Gulf. The king was a mortal, abject in his service of the unpredictable gods. Each succession was a new solution in society's desperate struggle for harmony with nature. The destiny of the universe no less than that of mankind must be determined afresh with each New Year. In this dramatic order divine whims such as the Great Flood might easily be repeated. Hence the everlasting anxiety and the unending effort to do something which might influence fate. Hence, too, the exultation that succeeded gloom each spring in tune with the recurring miracle of resurrection.

In the final analysis, to win peace of mind the Egyptian sacrificed his liberty. By submitting to the inevitable the Mesopotamian retained a substantial measure of independence. These are Frankfort's conclusions and they find strong support in the total evidence available. One might add that in Egypt the end-product was a sense of resignation; in Mesopotamia anxiety pointed a way to hope.

Frankfort is content on the whole to confine his penetrating search to the two great centers of ancient Near Eastern civilization. A brief epilogue attempts to draw in the Hebrews. In the reviewer's opinion, this attempt is a mistake because by doing too little it oversimplifies the issue and fails to place it in proper perspective. The book provides rich and ample fare as it is. A remarkable experiment on the part of history in two contrasted approaches to life can be followed over a period of three thousand years, a period more than half as long as recorded time. Environment and culture produced in Egypt an order that was sublimely totalitarian. In Mesopotamia the same two factors promoted the rudiments of democracy. Each system was in full harmony with its own particular background, and each established a record of astounding cultural achievement. Yet it was the Mesopotamian way that was singled out for creative borrowing by the Hebrews and the Greeks, to become thereby an important ingredient in modern civilization. There would seem to be here a legacy and a memento for our own time.

E. A. Speiser, Orientalist, is chairman of the division of humanities at the University of Pennsylvania.

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Rites, Dogmas, and Survival

THE HEATHENS: Primitive Man and His Religions. By William Howells. New York: Doubleday & Co. 1948. 293 *pp.* $3.75.

Reviewed by CLYDE KLUCKHOHN

THIS book is both learned and lively. Professor Howells is one of the few anthropologists who can write. A new and better book on the religions of primitives has long been needed. Robert Lowie's "Primitive Religion" has many excellent features but suffers from his ceremonial avoidance of psychoanalytic theory and his failure to understand the work of the great French sociologists of the Durkheim school. Apart from Lowie, one had to choose between the brilliant but somewhat private speculations of people like Paul Radin, and dull compendia. These latter are useful enough if one is seeking a selective digest of well-authenticated data on such topics as "Sacred Trees" or "Fast, Feast, and Vision"; if one, in short, is willing to take the data and let the concepts go. However, the facts speak for themselves only through the manipulations of a kind of ventriloquism on the part of the author. The very selection of data and their arrangement in categories proceeds in terms of premises which are the more questionable because suppressed and because often the writer himself is not consciously aware of his standards and hence cannot subject his concepts to the rigid criticism that he applies to his facts.

Mr. Howells has a simple conceptual scheme, and he tells the reader about it in the first chapter. He asks consistently: what kind of sense do specific beliefs and practices make in terms of the whole life of a people? How do rites and dogmas promote the survival of the group, social harmony within the group, and the psychological adjustment of individuals?

The book starts with an excellent brief introduction to the anthropological approach, not neglecting the biological basis of human nature. There follows a sensible discussion of the nature of religion that is integrative as well as eclectic. The heart of the study consists in a series of case histories on mana and tabu, black-and white-magic, divination, disease and medicine, witchcraft, shamanism, the after-world, souls and ghosts, ancestor worship, totemism, demons, deities, ritual, and the rise and fall of the Plains Indian Ghost Dance cult. Each case study is based on carefully chosen materials from the monographs. Howells's judgment as to what constitutes acceptable evidence is, so far as the reviewer can control it, rigorous. He has discriminated critically, selected wisely, and synthesized interestingly as well as lucidly. The light touch comes off well on the whole, though occasionally the lecturer wise-cracking to keep his class awake throws a shadow on the page.

Howells is primarily a physical anthropologist (and a first-rate one). Therefore the range of his reading in ethnology and social anthropology is astonishing. But it is equaled by its intensity. I suspect that this book gains much of its freshness and integrity from the circumstance that the writer was poaching on the territory of his colleagues in cultural anthropology. As Spencer (or someone) said, you would never expect a goldfish to discover the existence of water. But Howells has poured old wine from many bottles into a new container and produced a heady punch. Some of his bold generalizations are on the startling side, but in the main they appear sound.

The pedant can always, of course, find a few slips. I shall omit these details so boring to the non-specialist. However, two more general criticisms would be made by a good many anthropologists. The first is that he overplays the functional situational theory. The processes that determine events are imbedded in time as well as in situation. Howells gives little attention to concrete bits of religious behavior as the products of historical accident,

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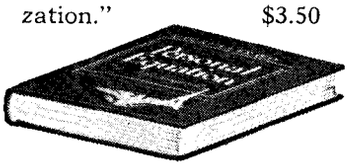

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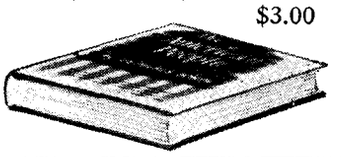

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as the end points of specific sequences of events reaching back into the remote past. The second objection is more a question of emphasis. While Howells is by no means as blind to psychology as Lowie, he has drunk all too cautiously from the rich vintage of contemporary psychiatry. Yet this is a book—not a treatise. Within the limits he staked out for himself Mr. Howells has done a job that will win the respect of the academic and the heartfelt thanks of the general reader.

Clyde Kluckhohn, author of the forthcoming Whittlesey House-Science Illustrated prize book, "Anthropology and the World Today," is professor of anthropology at Harvard and director of Harvard's new Russian Research Center.

Vision and Discipline

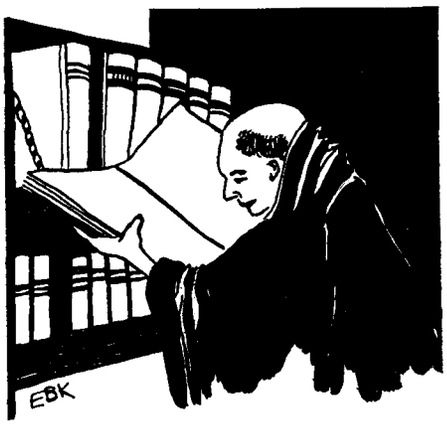
LETTERS OF THE SCATTERED BROTHERHOOD. Edited by Mary Strong. New York: Harper & Bros. 1948. 192 pp. $2.

Reviewed by PADRAIC COLUM

BOOKS of spiritual guidance like St. Francis de Sales's "Introduction to a Devout Life" or Fénelon's "Christian Perfection" have a short-term as well as a long-term value. Their long-term value, of course, is in the organizing o fthe intimations we have that we are in relation to eternal being and in the practice they induce to make that relation more and more perceptible. The ruck of us "fear to tread the secret holy place whereto the priest and prophet have access," and for that great concourse something less than the long term might mean a great deal. The short term isn't for everybody, either, but it is for those who have an intellectual life and are discriminating in it. The guides are speaking of vision and discipline; they are telling us (we are taking them on the short term) that instead of the quantity of things in our lives we ought to make an effort to get quality, instead of external interests we ought to have an internal life, instead of scattered multiplicity we ought to have singleness, instead of disorder, things selected and formed. And the gravity and urgency with which they speak make us really take account of these matters.

"Letters of the Scattered Brotherhood" are of the same character as the directions of Fénelon and St. Francis de Sales, and they deal with the special problems of our times. They are, I gather, written by religious in Anglican communities. They are not written in the language of uplift which is so very repelling. The tone of the letters is fervent and it is also manly.

> Now the purport of this wisdom is to reveal your character to you and in the very depths of the wisdom that will come to you, if you will listen, is contained the truth for your particular problems. . . . This is prayer, for prayer is actually the filling of a want, the lack, the emptiness. It is an act to take



> in quietness by yourself. As it has been said many times before, you teach your outer you by staying within.

Of course the writers of these letters use the language of devotion which, because it has been fixed at a certain period, tends to be familiar and touching on the commonplace. This is acknowledged. "Sometimes when you repeat the great familiar words," runs a passage in one of the letters, "they will sound stale and uninspired, but they will take on a new meaning, and in the quiet will be redeemed for you." They give us assurance. "Be still, impersonal, silent," says one, and the recommendation, backed by an experience and a sincerity that we feel, becomes an accompanying voice. "Keep a retreat like a pool in the rapids."

"Letters of the Scattered Brotherhood" is finely edited by Mary Strong, who makes a contribution of her own: it is in passages of vision and experience drawn from various religions, from philosophers and poets, placed beside the letters; these passages are like candles lighting the matter of the different letters. Whether we take them on the short term that so many of us will be inclined to take them on, or on the long term they are intended to be taken on, "Letters of the Scattered Brotherhood" will help us towards the internal, the formed, the discriminated. "To drift into the lassitude of unrealized potentialities"—even to be brought to understand that there is that danger is a gain for us.

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I Hate Mother's Day

SYLVIA R. LYONS

TIME was, long years ago, when "M" was for the million smiles I gave them and "O-T-H-E-R" denoted similar immeasurable things which, put together, represented MOTHER — and not florist associations, greeting-card printers, and manufacturers of plastic handbags, perfume of dubious scent, and ill-fitting rayon slips, whose profits are swelled by a super-induced national burst of emotion on the second Sunday in every May.

I have four fine sons. Each of my four excursions into the mysteries of early-morning sickness, the memorizing of the obstetrician's home and office phone numbers, the charting of my husband's course through the New York nightclub sector where he works so that word could reach him in time, the final dash to the hospital, and the rest of the now familiar routine, was accomplished without a single bit of assistance or encouragement from Fanny Farmer, Coco Chanel, or Elizabeth Arden. Messrs. Schrafft and Huyler, and nylonner du Pont, too, didn't even care whether it was another boy. Why should they come in on my gravy train once a year?

I don't know the name of the president of the Associated Florists of America, and he doesn't know mine—or even my children's. Why should he be able to dictate to them on what day they're to buy me an over-priced orchid? I've met the chairman of the board of Western Union—but that isn't reason enough for my children to add to the gross income of his communication system by addressing to me Message No. 16, on a Sunday morning in May.

Of course I want the florist and the candy shop on the corner to thrive. But I am vain and selfish enough to want my children to express their affection towards me on more than one day a year. And if, when they are old enough, they decide to express their thoughtfulness on only one day a year, then I know that I will have failed as a mother. I might even consider it some consolation if they were to select the one day themselves.

If we must have an organized Mother's Day on a specified date each year, I would prefer that the tribute be by contributions to hospitals with maternity services where, even in this modern day, two children out of every five born prematurely die—many of them for lack of heated cribs, incubators, or isolation facilities.

How much better it would be if the millions of dollars spent annually for flowers, candy, junk jewelry, geegaws, and jimcracks in honor of Mother's Day were diverted to medical research on still-births and miscarriages, to clinics providing prenatal care and food for the young, to ease the suffering and eliminate this utter waste of physical strength, time, pain, money, and heartache. I prefer a tribute by donations to funds for medical research on sterility, to help hasten the day when married couples who are frustrated and unhappy because they have not been blessed with children can achieve parenthood.

Instead of the handkerchiefs, stockings, bracelets, and other items specified by profit-seeking merchants as the necessary, fitting mementoes of my motherhood, I am content with the violets purchased by my eldest son with half his weekly allowance on a brisk day in autumn, and with the paintings drawn for me by my second son on a gentle morning in spring. I treasure the small box which contains "I miss you and love you" postcards, however difficult to decipher, sent from their summer camp. I covet the lisping tributes of my three-year-old and the tender glances cast by the six-month-old, two-tooth job.

I somehow find it difficult to believe that questionable beauty creams or assorted chocolates or even fruits and nuts are the irrefutable assurances that my place is secure in the hearts of my children. I prefer a Mother's Day celebrated by organizing the same tireless women who worked so fervently for the Red Cross and the AWVS during the war, to collect funds with which to combat the appalling infant-mortality rate—to ease the heartbreak of the 11,000 parents whose babies are destined to die this year before their first birthday.

Such a day would be one of lasting, important, and living tribute to every mother in the land. I'm for such a Mother's Day. It should be celebrated by flags, newspaper appeals, and pretty girls soliciting funds from young husbands and elderly bachelors. If a man can wear a red cross on his lapel, why not at the end of spring the outline of a smiling baby? A central organization can be formed to manage the dollars accumulated to take better care of women before and during the birth of their babies, and for their protection immediately after.

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TWISTING THE TAIL OF THE COSMOS

(*Continued from page 9*)

modest demands of the cosmos than those who are disposed to think that it wears a beard.

* * *

The further I get away from Spengler the freer I feel to decline his dogmas—but the stimulus was worth the trouble of reading him. I doubt as to Vol. 2. I very much should like to look it over—but I doubt if I should work through it—and if you meant me to keep Vol. 1 I don't want you to make another gift—and on the other hand I always am worried by books to be returned until I have seen them dispatched by mail. I should be grateful for any suggestions such as you intimate that you have up your sleeve. If *schicksal* is in the realm of the *ding an sich*—much as I believe in it—I leave speculation about it to other hands. As to causality I think I have said before that if phenomena appeared without causes and I wasn't too scared to think, I simply should smile and say: Tired so soon? I thought you would last my time—I always surmise that just as objects of sight or hearing can be expressed in other terms which make them finite, it well may be that Time is a mode of the finite—and that if the cosmos wears a beard its mode of consciousness may be in some other unimaginable form. I find it hard to believe that infinite time is an ultimate, although it is so for me—

* * *

After Spengler I read Thucydides the most important books 1, 2 & 7 in Greek, the rest mainly in translation—It was my last Day of Judgment book and I can die more easily. I think the English make too much row about him, although of course he was the first in his line. I can get more eternal truths for less money elsewhere. I was moved but it gave me pleasure to think that Socrates was jawing away while the empire fell—and that after it fell it became the leader of the world in philosophy—I noted with interest what always strikes me in the Greek choruses—the absence of politeness as we understand it—and the kindred absence of the hypocritic Christian sanction in political communications. They come down to hard facts without veils. Since then I have read "Marius the Epicurean"—curious product of the old Oxford exquisiteness — from a scholar and a gentleman who never has come in contact with the grind of affairs—and to my mind a futile importation of Pater's spiritual experiences into a time and mind to which they were impossible — Now I am reading "La Guerre et la Paix"—A long novel ought to be thin, like Dumas—It is an imposition to take so much of a reader's time with thick fiction—when every sentence requires notice, but Tolstoy was a giant—little as I care for what he thought.

* * *

After "War and Peace" I read Butler's "Way of All Flesh"—He has many keen insights—I have suspected that he had not such a central one as co-ordinated them into a philosophy.—Now I am in Salter's "Nietzsche"—When years ago I read translations of N. he seemed to me to be writing in a less emancip[at]ed atmosphere and to think and ask us to think that he was a Hell of a Fellow because he didn't believe what his neighbors did—but I shall read Salter with a reasonably docile mind—I think I have read Santayana's book—but have not yet examined it.

* * *

Santayana improved somewhat on rereading—as a careful stopping of rat holes though it hardly seems to me novel and seems to me verbose through his desire to make literature. Perhaps his Catholic antecedents make him like to use words that trail rainbows but disguise his meaning, esp. spirit and essence—his literary turn often has a similar effect upon me—Simmel seems to me rather a dull maker of superfluous categories—some of the later pieces seemed to me the best. I was pleased however to see him emphasize experiences that fill the field of consciousness to the exclusion of the antithesis of ego and nonego. I used to dwell on that as a partial explanation of sympathy, *e.g.* pain—the suggestion of it tends to fill the field and it is a second thought that the pain is that of the other fellow not of you—but the suggestion never seems to have impressed anyone.

* * *

I regard the will to believe as of a piece with the insistence on the discontinuity of the universe which Bill James shares with Cardinal Newman, and which I suspect was induced by the wish to leave room for the interstitial miracle. When we were in our twenties W. James said to me (in substance) that spiritualism was the last chance to spiritualize or idealize the world. I then and ever since have regarded that as a carnal and superficial view. As to the will to believe why may we not ask on what ground it is recommended except some assumed can't help to which we all must yield—Otherwise why would it not be a sufficient answer to say I don't want to?

* * *

I just have reread his [Bacon's] essays and they led me to repeat that the first cause of the survival of a great work is its *sound*. Without the song of his words Shakespeare would not be read as he is. Bacon's "Essays" with necessary dross have many shrewd remarks—but they are ABC to us and we shouldn't read them if they didn't sound so well—we should get more mental stimulus from a number of *The New Republic*.

* * *

My sec'y is reading Trotsky's autobiography to me now. Laski imposed it on me and I shouldn't be happy not to finish it, but I don't like the man, or see the evidence that he incarnated a great truth, and his life calls up all the ultimately critical judgments that I got from early association with the abolitionists.

* * *

I have no *magnum opus* mastered as an achievement of vacation, but I have read some things and a little philosophy. The result has been to add to my bill of rights this: No man shall be held to master a system of philosophy that is fifty years old—The comment is that all that anyone, philosopher as well as others, has to contribute is a small number of *aperçus* — But he constructs a system (which never lasts) and a later generation, if it wants to read his insights at first hand, always probably familiar with them, has to wash two tons of sand for a tablespoon full of gold—The experienced, if they do it, know what they are about, but the young think that the system is the thing and that they must master that—which older fellows regard simply as a bore to be sifted. This was suggested by Spinoza's "Ethics," with memory of Kant & Hegel. I don't believe his postulate or yield to his logic—yet I immensely value his sense of the continuity of the universe and his superhuman view of good and evil.

The demands of life shut me up—I must stop—but I am

Ever sincerely yours,
O. W. HOLMES.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 736)

ROBERT P. T. COFFIN:
YANKEE COAST

In what is left of the older United States, in these states of Maine and Vermont, there is something that we shall do well not to lose, something plain as the rock strata of those places. It is the ribs, the rock ribs of democracy.

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BOOKS AND MEMORIES

THE ANNUAL engagement of the circus in Manhattan this year proves it to be even more exciting than usual, especially the wild animals. The elephants, on their way from the freight yards in Harlem to Madison Square Garden, stopped the traffic on Fifty-seventh Street and sent busy people into a trance-like state of delight, from the lady shoppers to the ecstatic small boys. So it is altogether fitting that a number of the picture books and at least one of the stories reviewed in this number should be about wild animals. There is no better way in which to prolong a happy experience than through a book. Older members of the family read with nostalgia of the happy places they once knew on a European continent unravaged by war, and all the old delight, the old beauty that seemed imperishable comes back to them. To the children who have seen or will see the circus this year give the "Tiny Books" about wild animals. Give them Ruth Gannett's "My Father's Dragon." The dragon himself is a minor character. He furnishes the motive for my father's quest. But the young tigers, the boars, the lion, the rhinoceros, the gorilla, and the crocodiles are so memorable that they will keep the joys of the circus alive for years to come. To confirm and renew a memory through a good book is a pleasure that is open to everyone, young and old.

MARY GOULD DAVIS.

MY FATHER'S DRAGON. By Ruth Stiles Gannett. Illustrations by Ruth Chrisman Gannett. New York: Random House. 1948. 87 *pp.* $2.

THIS is, without question, the funniest book that we have seen for a month of Sundays. It is also an exciting adventure story that will please small boys and girls, and their elders, from Maine to Florida and from Canada to Mexico. As a book to share with children it is a treasure, and storytellers will read it with a solemn joy, hearing in imagination the delighted chuckles of their listeners. The hero is "my father," and he is the kind of hero who arouses instant admiration and approval. Advised by a very intelligent Manhattan alley cat, he stows away on a ship and voyages to Cranberry on the Island of Tangerina. After crossing some rather dangerous stepping stones, which include the back of a sleeping whale, my father reaches Wild Island in his search for a young dragon who was caught and is being abused by the wild animals who live there. The alley cat had told my father what to take with him, and his varied assortment of luggage proved the wisdom of the alley cat. He subdued the seven tigers by giving them chewing gum, the rhinoceros by teaching him how to whiten his tusks with tooth paste, the lion by brushing and combing his mane and tying it up with ribbons, the gorilla by giving the monkeys who were engaged in trying to catch his fleas magnifying glasses so that they could see them better, the crocodiles by fastening pink lollypops on their tails and demonstrating how they could be enjoyed more easily by making a chain of themselves across the river, thus enabling my father to reach the farther side—and the dragon.

This is the gist of the action, but no mere words can convey the delights of the story and of the illustrations. Everyone remembers Mrs. Gannett's drawings for "Miss Hickory." These are even more distinguished. Each animal is clearly characterized. All have strength and realism and irresistible humor. Humor, the kind that makes you laugh aloud, runs through every word of the story and every line of the pictures. This reviewer has always been a great admirer of the fanciful tales of Frank R. Stockton. Here we find the same practical, business-like style in narration, the same way of making an absurdity sound like a fact, the same sharpness of characterization. Stockton himself might have written the dialogue between the two boars when they discuss the invader of their island.

—From "My Father's Dragon."

The book is dedicated to "My Father" but the publishers tell us that the hero of the story is *not* Lewis Gannett. A pity! We would love to think of him entertaining such glorious memories.

BRAMBLE. Drawn and told by Margery Colman. New York: Coward-McCann. 1948. *No paging.* $1.85.

A picture book in color that tells of a hedgehog who goes into his winter sleep with an alarm clock that tells the months instead of the hours. It stops at November and, when Bramble finally wakens, has to be set again. No one can tell him the proper time, although Nature makes it quite obvious. Finally the sun obliges and Bramble is straightened out.

MR. AND MRS. NOAH. By Lois Lenski. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co. 1948. *No paging.* $1.

Miss Lenski uses the familiar figures of a wooden toy Noah's Ark in her design for this new record of the famous voyage. It is a small book in bright color and will probably appeal instantly to little boys and girls.

THE LITTLE FARMER. By Margaret Wise Brown. Pictures by Esphyr Slobodkin. New York: William R. Scott. 1948. *No paging.* $1.50.

This is a simple, rhythmic text about a little farmer and a big farmer, but the drawings are unusual. They are in full, brilliant color with a wide perspective of hills and fields and sky. The lines of the farm buildings and of the animals are solid and convincing. Even very little children will feel the wind blow and the sun shine. It is an attractive and an informing book.

RABBITS. By Herbert S. Zim. Pictures by Joy Buba. New York: William Morrow & Co. 1948. *No paging.* $2.

Like his "Turtles" and "Elephants," this is a practical and useful book about rabbits as pets. It tells how to build their hutch, how to feed them and keep them healthy and happy. There are many drawings, however, and it is a picture book that younger boys and girls will enjoy.

ROSIE THE RHINO. By Marion Conger. Pictures by Kurt Wiese. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press. 1948. *No paging.* $1.

Kurt Wiese has made some very amusing drawings for this story of

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—*From "In Norway."*

a lady rhinoceros who leaves her home at the zoo and wanders through the town, buying herself an Easter bonnet and doing various other things. This reviewer wishes that the pink ink had been omitted. Otherwise, Rosie's adventures make a satisfying book.

PETER PAINTS THE U. S. A. Pictures by Arnold Edwin Bare. Text by Jean Poindexter Colby and the Junior Reviewers. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1948. *No paging.* $2.50.

Peter took some paints and brushes along with him when he toured the country in a car with his father and mother and his Scottie dog Jenny. The large, full-page pictures in color that he painted along the way show many parts of the country, from the Maine coast to California and Florida. The artist, who was Peter long ago, is the one who made the pictures for "Pierre Pidgeon" and "Ilenka."

FISH IN THE AIR. Story and pictures by Kurt Wiese. New York: The Viking Press. 1948. *No paging.* $2.

In the format of "You Can Write Chinese" this tells the story of a little Chinese boy who was carried away with his kite in a strong wind. It shows vividly the "feel" of the wind as it blows over land and water in China. The line of the drawings is sometimes obscured by the color. The book would be more effective if black and white had predominated.

TINY ANIMAL STORIES. By Dorothy Kunhardt. Pictures by Garth Williams. 12 *vols. New York: Simon & Schuster.* 1948. 24 *pp. ea.* $1.

Here is a cleverly designed little bookcase decorated in color. In it are twelve tiny books, three inches long and two inches wide. Each book tells the story of a baby animal: a kangaroo, a giraffe, a hippopotamus, a camel, a bear, a lion, a whale, a gorilla, a rhinoceros, a tiger, a leopard, and an elephant. Each book is well-bound, well-printed, and has attractive end-papers in color. The paintings that Garth Williams has made for them are remarkably well reproduced. They show the animals against their natural background with humor and fidelity. The stories are slight. Children will probably not remember them very long, but they will long remember the format and the pictures.

IN NORWAY. By Gudrun Thorne-Thomsen. Illustrated by Eyvind Earle. New York: The Viking Press. 1948. 159 *pp.* $3.

This is the story of the Norse people and their country. The sequence runs from the Vikings to the men and women who called upon their native humor and courage during the years of the Second World War. It is a record, too, of the land itself; of the forests and the farm lands, of the rivers and waterfalls, of the clean, well-planned cities and the seaports. Gudrun Thorne-Thomsen is best known for her translations and her telling of the Norse folktales and legends. They are here, too, skilfully woven into the history. The last chapter tells of the German occupation, and of the destruction that the Germans left behind them. The book is illustrated with strong black-and-white drawings that express Norway's spirit and background. From the rocky coast line and the towering trees to the exquisite outline of a little white birch against a summer sky they show a country that is strong and beautiful and free.

THE PICTURE STORY OF THE PHILIPPINES. By Hester O'Neill. Pictures by Ursula Koering. Philadelphia: David McKay. 1948. *No paging.* $2.50.

The illustrations for this informal and interesting story of the Philippines are printed in brown, green, and red, creating an atmosphere that is authentic and enticing. It would be a fascinating adventure to go to Manila with this book as a guide. On every page the story, printed in brown ink, is supplemented with many small drawings that show the people in action—gay, vigorous children, men and women carrying on their work of fishing and farming, buying and selling. They show, too, the native festivals, especially on the Fourth of July, which is their Independence Day. Little children will claim this as a picture book. Older boys and girls will find it informing and stimulating.

JUDITH OF FRANCE. By Margaret Leighton. Illustrated by Henry Pitz. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1948. 231 *pp.* $2.50.

This is the story of the Princess Judith of France, the grandniece of Charlemagne. It tells of her love for the French warrior Bras de Fer, of her forced marriage to the old Saxon King of England and her defense

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
SHE WALKS ALONE *Helen McCloy* (Random: $2.50)	Girl carrying coveted 100-grand center of 'board-ship slayings involving deadly snake, deadlier humans, and Police Capt. Miguel Urizar.	Caribbean-N. Y. voyage stage for highly suspenseful tale played by interesting people through supersinuous situations to ending few will guess.	Top-brackets
HOPE TO DIE *Hillary Waugh* (Coward-McCann: $2)	Well-heeled N. Y. private op. Wesley takes skip-tracing job that breaks up band of jewel crooks after half-dozen homicides.	Sutton Place apts., 2nd Ave. dives, and other dainty spots for deviltry are backgrounds for capably plotted, quick-triggered tale.	Speedy

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against the hostile Saxons after his death, of her final reunion with Bras de Fer. The background of medieval France and England is convincing and rich in detail. It is a dramatic story with an appealing heroine.

THE BEAVER ROAD. By Isabel Couper McLelland. Illustrated by Mary Stevens. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1948. 152 *pp.* $2.50.

This is a jolly, friendly story of the McTavish family—father, mother, Christine, Jonathan, and Wee Jean—who came from Scotland to Oregon in the early years of the twentieth century. They rather planned to go back to Scotland, but the bank of the little new city of Bayside closed its doors, the money for return tickets was tied up, and the McTavish family decided to stay on and become American citizens. Coming over on the liner they met an old Irish woman who made a prophecy for them. There in Oregon the prophecy was fulfilled. The McTavish family made good friends, trouble came to their door on horseback, and "they rubbed elbows with fear," but in the end "hope and happiness lighted their steps."

DAUGHTER OF THE MOUNTAINS. By Louise Rankin. Illustrated by Kurt Wiese. New York: The Viking Press. 1948. 191 *pp.* $2.50.

This is a story of Tibet and of a journey to the plains of India that was taken by Momo in search of her little dog, Pempa. The background and atmosphere are remote and strange, but Momo herself is a girl whom boys and girls everywhere can understand and approve. The story of her adventure flows along easily and with mounting suspense. It is dominated by the mountains, the swift-flowing rivers, the almost incredible physical hardships.

Momo's story is a dramatic one. It is convincing in its atmosphere, and the characters are varied and well drawn. It is the story of a remote and backward people living in a country that we know too little about.

BLUE SPRING FARM. By Claire Huchet Bishop. New York: The Viking Press. 1948. 183 *pp.* $2.

Blue Spring Farm in the Pennsylvania hills was a summer music school where children and grown-ups lived together and learned to play on the piano. The head of the school, Mr. T., was a famous pianist who understood people and knew how to bring out the best in them. That summer there were seven grown-ups and twelve children at Blue Spring Farm. There were also Mr. and Mrs. T. and Buttercup, the maid, who helped Mrs. T. cook the marvelous French food. There was a swimming pool and acres of land and miles of wood. So the children decided to buy a tractor and plant six acres of sugar beets, the tractor to be paid for when the beets were harvested. Through it all they played on the piano, some fairly well and some very well indeed. Their love of music was a bond, tying them all together although they were as different as twelve people can be.

It will be interesting to see what boys and girls will make of this story. Perhaps only the natural music lovers will completely understand its underlying theme.

CANADIAN SUMMER. Written and illustrated by Hilda van Stockum. New York: The Viking Press. 1948. 191 *pp.* $2.50.

We have here a new chronicle of the irrepressible Mitchell family and of their summer in a Canadian forest not far from Montreal. Mr. Mitchell had accepted a position in Montreal and the only house that he could find for Mrs. Mitchell, the six children, the grandmother, the dog, and Mr. Jenkins, the parrot, was an abandoned ski-hut deep in the woods. There was a very nice French family with seven children nearby and the Mitchells managed somehow to get the necessary food. Clothes did not matter. The woods and the lake furnished endless delights.

It is fun to read a book like this about attractive people who do the most unexpected things. Graceful drawings serve as chapter headings and full-page illustrations.

They only looked like pebbles . . . but they proved to be couriers of death in this new novel of a murder and a phony enchantress whose middle name spelled *kaput.*

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The New Recordings

COMPOSITION, PERFORMER, ALBUM NUMBER, NUMBER OF RECORDS	ENGINEERING		PERFORMANCE AND CONTENT
	Recording Technique	*Surface*	
BEETHOVEN, SYMPHONY #9. Koussevitzky, Boston Symphony, Berkshire Festival Chorus (Shaw), soloists. Victor DM 1190 (8)	Apparently made in empty "music shed"—muffling sort of echo puts performers at a distance, muddies music. Soft passages very low-level.	B to B—	Weingartner—over 15 yrs. old—wins, all counts. Musically the Kouss. version is heavy-handed, solid, impeded by poor acoustics. Ormandy's is lighter; good but not excellent. Weingartner is both more lyric, more exciting than either new set. His music is most alive, his old recording has best acoustics, most natural sound.
Comparisons: (SAME) Ormandy, Phila. Orch. Westminster Choir. Columbia MM 591 (8)	This version on the dead side acoustically. Widest tonal range, though not to much advantage. Best technically.	A	
(SAME) Weingartner, Vienna Philharmonic State Opera Chorus, solos.	In spite of age this is brighter, warmer, more clear than Boston version on par with Ormandy. But loud choral parts suffer, notably ending.	A	
SCHUMANN, SYMPHONY #3 ("RHENISH"). Mitropoulos, Minneapolis Symphony. Victor DM 1184 (4)	Recording has brilliance, natural liveness, good concert hall sound, though not wide range.	A—	Though the new Victor version is technically improved, Bruno Walter's performance is so immeasurably superior that even recording itself seems better! M. is good enough, Walter is superb. An outstanding interpretation.
Comparison: (SAME) Bruno Walter, N. Y. Philharmonic. Columbia MM 464 (4)	A Columbia prewar, and far from present C. quality, though music comes through. (See comments right.)	A—	
OPERATIC ARIAS. (Verdi, Donizetti, Meyerbeer, Cilea). Tagliavini, RCA Victor Orch. Dorati. Victor VO 13 (2 *plastic*)	On this fine plastic Victor might give more than rudimentary high tones! Seems more muffled than most V. shellacs.	AA	The early acoustical records, with vestigial accpt. did wonders for the voice itself; the new Tagliavini vocal recording is not enormously better. Compare these—old and new—and note remarkable change in vocal standards. T.'s pleasant voice is more Irish than Italian, a mere shadow of brass-gold Caruso and De Lucia powerhouses. But a nice musical personality, nevertheless.
"HERITAGE" SERIES. Homer and Caruso sing from "Aida," Act IV. (1910) Victor EM 26 (1 *plastic*)	These plastic repressings are remarkable improvement—background hiss almost eliminated, much *hidden music* revealed. No highs, no lows: play with filters if you can.	AA	
Fernando de Lucia sings from "Traviata," Act II, "Mignon," Act II. Victor EM 25 (1 *plastic*)		AA	
MOZART, SONATA #14 IN A MAJOR, K. 310. HINDEMITH, SONATA #2. Jacques Abrams, pianist. Musicraft 89 (3)	A very satisfactory type of piano recording, as good as anything now being done. Poor surfaces.	B+	"Classicism to Neo-Cl.," says label; but a better ill. of continuity in Austrian-German tradition. Solid, serious Mozart playing, non-elfin. Hindemith is even better, both most attractive listening.

SOMETIMES THE OLD OUTDOES THE NEW

THE comparisons above may be taken as a mild reproof to current publicity of the ever-better-and-better sort. As a tireless exponent of all that is new in recording, I think I can afford to remind you that in the heat of the moment's publicity it is easy to lose perspective. Large numbers of older records still outperform their newer counterparts on various scores, even including the technical. Direct and immediate comparison will yield many surprises—as witness the ancient Weingartner 9th, above, which is still well ahead on *all* the counts that matter. Recording is always a challenge to ingenuity—and perhaps luck. Keep those fingers crossed!

EDWARD TATNALL CANBY.

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the Phoenix Nest

THE PASS

THE pass cuts sharply through the jagged ridge,
And thunder rumbles out its savage hate.
Below us, in the gorge, the frightened bridge
Steps cautiously across the churning spate.
The wind sings out a high, discordant tune
Which leaves its pungent mark on hearts and brains.
The grasses whip and snarl instead of croon;
The rain slants down in streams, and sobs, and strains.
The wind among the sharp rocks snoops and sniffs,
And lightning stutters out its shocked surprise.
The storm-lashed ferns hang down from lighted cliffs
Like ragged eyebrows on an old man's eyes.
The branches rave and flail and toss and roar,
And time keeps slamming like a latchless door.

E. V. GRIFFITH.

* * *

My sister and I recently took my step-grandson to a Sunday matinee of "Rumpelstiltskin" given by the Children's World Theatre at the Barbizon-Plaza Hotel.

I think that Charlotte B. Chorpenning has considerably improved upon the Brothers Grimm in this play. Sheldon Thompson's direction and designing seemed good to me, and Bette Butterworth, both as costume designer and Miller's Daughter, is a young actress of talent. My young companion, Timothy, was profoundly moved by her griefs in the latter rôle. During Act I he announced that he was scared, and at the end of Act II, after several times shielding his eyes with his hand, as though he could not bear the development of the story, he seemed rather shaken. However, I entered into a brisk discussion of stage technique (of which I know but little) and emphasized the fact that the play was wholly a work of the imagination. He concurred. But the upper stage, illustrating "the edge of the world," continued to seem pretty real to him, though the fact that the servitors went West to find East, and vice versa, may have reminded him that the earth is not *actually* flat. Michael Howard as Rumpelstiltskin, with whom he shook hands after the performance, seemed to him very effective. In fact Timothy's mouth was open most of the time. He was completely lost in another region.

I should like to urge all of you in New York to support the Children's World Theatre! These young people—and they are professionals of the stage—are doing a beautiful job with plays for children. Their "Red Riding Hood" was excellent. For next year they plan a choice of "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves," "Peter Pan," "The Pied Piper of Hamelin," "Cinderella," "The Secret Garden," and "The Indian Captive." Filling in a vote blank for Timothy — the children vote for what they want to see—my sister asked him which ones were his choice. He replied, with eyes rolling, and great definiteness, "*I want to see all of them!*"

* * *

THE NEST has good detectives. Eleanor Frandsen of Washington, D. C., Le Roy S. Dangler of the Department of English at Lafayette College, and others spotted "Splitting the Infinitive" as by Norman R. Jaffray and as having originally appeared in *The Saturday Evening Post*. Mr. Jaffray himself writes as follows from Santa Barbara, Calif.

> The piece on splitting the infinitive quoted in THE PHOENIX NEST [*SRL* March 27] is a thing of mine originally printed in *The Saturday Evening Post* (POST SCRIPTS) and appeared, as nearly as I can figure it, in the issue for Feb. 22, 1947. Apparently *The Chemical Digest* did not see fit to ask permission from, nor to give credit to, either the author or the *Post*, since the first indication I received that it had been reprinted was its appearance in your column.
>
> And, incidentally, it is a "bath," not a "path," of pleonasm, into which the infinitive is said to be plunged. I make this correction for the benefit of any other magazines which decide to give my orphaned article further unauthorized circulation.

W. B. Child of this city adds the following suggestion:

> Referring to the "Splitting the Infinitive," it seems that the atomic grammarians were naive in thinking they could keep such details secret. It is obvious that the only Alpha-Betical ray that could make such a widespread devastation must have been . . . the Grammar ray.

As for myself, I am proud to count Mr. Jaffray as a PHOENIX NEST contributor, whether directly or not.

* * *

Some time ago, aroused by something I read in a book of Max Eastman's, I perpetrated the following, rather as a jocosity than anything else, though on the subject of religion we apparently do not agree. I first met Max in the days of the original *Masses* when he accepted a poem of mine. Luck to his continued "Enjoyment of Life"!

FALSE LIGHTS

> "I hope as well as believe that, shorn of its irrelevant supports and embellishments, it [religion] will fade away slowly as a false light over the desert from the minds of men." —MAX EASTMAN.

Active with heat and life the desert stirred
until the last light faded and was done.
Then there was cold, and many a grieving word
from a chilled world, that had put out the sun.

Yet, quite as confident as Clifford Bax
who saw the arts extinct, and Muses dead,
the entertaining and ingenious Max
was rigging some sort of arc-lamp overhead.

"There!" he announced. "It flickers!" some opined.
"Tut, tut!" he said, "Do have some self-reliance!
Do call on your omnipotence of mind!
My sun's inerrable. Its name is Science."

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. "Little Women," by Louisa M. Alcott. 2. "Lorna Doone," by Richard Blackmore. 3. "The Ancient Mariner," by Coleridge. 4. "Une Vie," by Guy de Maupassant. 5. "Great Expectations," by Charles Dickens. 6. "The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor," by Conan Doyle. 7. "The Mikado," by W. S. Gilbert. 8. "Tobacco Road," by James Kirkland. 9. "The Bride of Lammermoor," by Sir Walter Scott. 10. "A Ballade Upon a Wedding," by Sir John Suckling.

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The Travel Log

NORTH AMERICA

(Part I)

The Saturday Review's Guide to selected 16mm. sound films for the fireside traveler.

Title	*Description*
SHORTEST WAY HOME Greyhound Bus Lines	A story film in which the plot takes the leading characters on a tour of the whole country. Over twenty famous travel spots are included, some of which are: Colonial Williamsburg, New Orleans, Hollywood, Miami, Yellowstone, Salt Lake City, Mackinac Island, Boston, Concord, and Lexington. (33 minutes.)
FROM COAST TO COAST Canadian Pacific Railway	A colorful journey across the Dominion, showing as many high spots as can be covered in a half-hour film. (30 minutes.)
ROMANTIC MEXICO Illinois Central Railroad	With John Paul King as narrator, this trip includes Mexico City, Chapultepec Park, Xochimilco and the floating gardens, bull fights, Taxco, Cordoba, San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato, Cuernevaca, and Acapulco. (26 minutes.)
LET'S SEE CHICAGO Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe	A film tour of this famous railroad hub and industrial center; the park system, network of boulevards, museums, sports, and packing town activity. (20 minutes.)
NEW YORK CALLING! New York Central System	By rail down the scenic Hudson River Valley into Gotham. By boat around Manhattan island. By bus up Fifth Avenue to museums, parks, zoos. Radio City, Coney Island, and the famous skyline, too. (24 minutes.)
INVITATION TO THE NATION Washington, D. C., Board of Trade	The Capitol, the White House, Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials, Washington Monument, and other points of interest to the tourist. (10 minutes.)
CARLSBAD CAVERNS Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe	Located in southeastern New Mexico are the world's greatest caverns. The camera follows the seven-mile trail through the Queen's Chamber, the King's Palace and the Big Room, nearly three-quarters of a mile long, over 625 feet in width, and 300 feet high. (25 minutes.)
GUARDIANS OF GUNSIGHT (Glacier National Park) Great Northern Railway	The record of a horseback trail ride from Going-to-the-Sun Chalets over Gunsight Pass to Sperry Glacier to hunt mountain goats with a camera. Some of the finest wild animal pictures ever shot in Kodachrome. (18 minutes.)
GRAND CANYON IN NORTHERN ARIZONA Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe	Along the south rim of the canyon; mule-back parties on the trails; Phantom Ranch; in the heart of the canyon, and Havasu Falls. (25 minutes.)
MAGIC BENEATH THE CLOUDS Denver & Rio Grande Western RR	The scenic grandeur of the entire Pike's Peak region (14,110 feet elev.) including famous Garden of the Gods, Cave of the Winds, Broadmoor, Will Rogers Shrine of the Sun, Cripple Creek, Seven Falls, World's Highest Bridge, and the Royal Gorge. Narration by Don Wilson. (30 minutes.)
THUNDERING WATERS New York Central System	The story of Niagara Falls, emphasizing its geographical, economic, historical, and geological aspects, as well as its spectacular beauty. Also shown are the points of interest surrounding the falls. (21 minutes.)
SUMMERTIME IN YOSEMITE Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe	Sheer granite cliffs, blue lakes, trout streams, and mountain trails, waterfalls, Half Dome, El Capitan, Mirror Lake, and Merced River. (15 minutes.)
WESTWARD TO THE SEA Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific Railroad	Tour of Yellowstone Park. Scenes in Jefferson River Canyon, the Continental Divide, Grand Coulee Dam, Cascade Mountains; and westward to Spokane, Seattle, and Tacoma. (20 minutes.)

For further information about the purchase or rental of these and other films, please write to Film Department, The Saturday Review of Literature, 25 West 45 Street New York 19, N. Y.

All the above are 16 mm. sound, color film, available without charge.

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(Continued from page 37)

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B. Large-footed.	83 6 155 128 169 66 46
C. A poet in the Gilbert and Sullivan opera "Patience".	43 80 34 140 98 157 9 136 174
D. Instrumental composition or passage in melodious style.	172 154 33 19 78 52
E. Bank of a river beyond which the waters do not normally flow.	89 119 28 44
F. To associate closely with (3 wds.).	11 143 5 130 76 161 56 67 63 95 84 180 111
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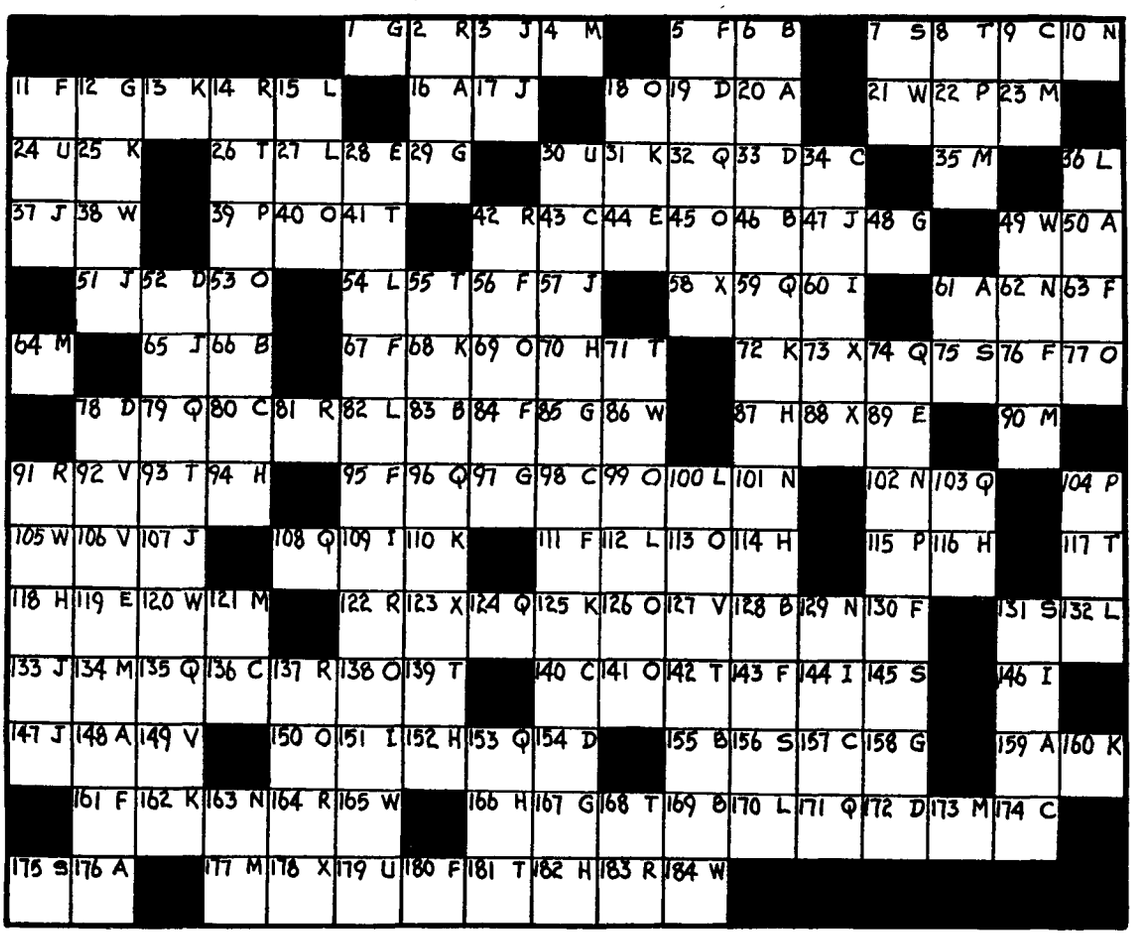
O. A cornucopia (3 wds.).	141 40 53 45 99 77 113 138 126 150 69 18
P. Cromwell's chaplain and author of many controversial tracts (1616-83).	115 104 22 39
Q. A sheer, light, silk fabric for dresses.	124 32 171 79 59 96 74 135 108 103 153
R. The attitude of readiness for action or receiving orders (mil.).	42 91 122 14 164 137 81 2 183
S. Sister of William II of Germany and Queen of Greece (1913-17; 1920-22).	7 156 131 145 175 75
T. Tiny hero of one of Charles Perrault's fairy tales (comp.).	71 55 26 142 93 139 41 181 8 168 117
U. Artist sister in Louisa Alcott's writings (mutation of first name of one of her own sisters).	30 24 179
V. To engrave, scratch, mark, or wound.	127 92 149 106
W. Quarters; place (colloq.; U. S.).	38 49 165 184 105 120 86 21
X. The port of Medina, Arabia.	73 123 178 58 88

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).



Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 30 of this issue.

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David L. Cohn

A Thumbnail Sketch

David L. Cohn was born and brought up in Greenville, Mississippi, an old port on the great river. The region is one of cotton plantations, the straight Democratic ticket, oratory, barbecues, revivals, catfish parlors, magnolias, sweet-talking gentlemen, white and Negro, and ladies suffering the agreeable fatigues incident to an excess of male gallantry. The whole area, except for such recently imported barbarisms as the income tax and Mr. Longfellow's doctrine "Let us, then, be up and doing!", is a river-bottom Cytherea tenanted by a happy people suspiring with sentiment.

In a moment of youthful morbidity which he has never ceased to regret, Mr. Cohn left this Eden in search of an education at the University of Virginia and Yale: a process which, he says, threw him into chronic disorder as it does most Americans. In a fit of abstraction, he became a successful business man in New Orleans and New York, and led a useful, happy life. Then hearing one day that writers meet such interesting people, he abandoned his honest calling and became a writer.

Since then, with a keen eye and a sharp sense of humor, he has surveyed America, recording its sociological foibles in such books as "The Good Old Days" as seen through fifty years of Sears-Roebuck mail-order catalogs; "Love in America" which probed a tender subject with a delicate hand; and "Combustion on Wheels" which nostalgically evoked the early days of automobiling.

His latest book, "Where I Was Born and Raised", to be published May 13, is an enlargement of an earlier book, "God Shakes Creation", a work which grew out of his boyhood. Once more he returns to Greenville, Mississippi, on the Delta, to analyze the changes which ten years have made in this lush, lazy and lavish region, which he calls, "a colonial dependency of the northeastern section of the United States" and as he talks he pictures, indeed, a foreign country.

In a style as beguiling as any appearing today, David Cohn states the case of the civilized Southerner. Through delight in the stories of a master raconteur, the reader is challenged to some straight thinking on a gravely serious national problem.

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